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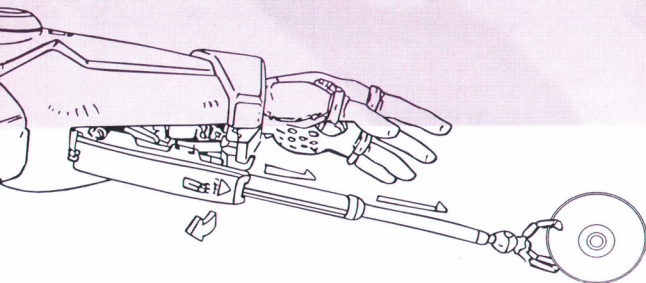
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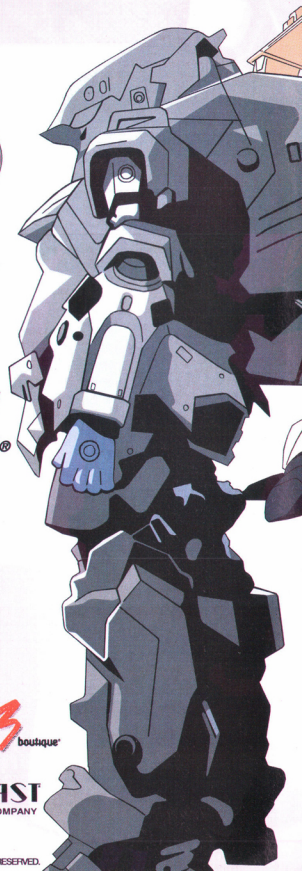
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ANIME INVASION

#1 • WINTER 2002

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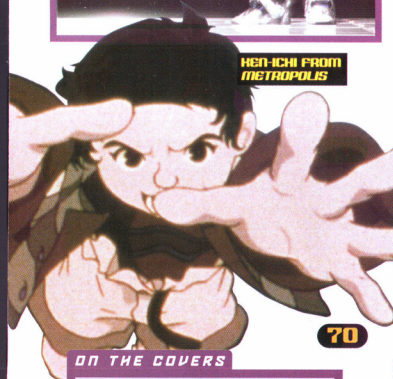
DRAGON BALL



GUNDAM

58

KENICHI FROM METROPOLIS



ON THE COVERS



We're sticking with the G's—*Dragon Ball's* young Goku, from FUNimation, and Gundam GP-01Fb, drawn by J. Scott Campbell and inked by Tim Townsend.

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FROM THE TOP

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND BEGINNING



Welcome to the first issue of ANIME INVASION magazine, which anyone who's paying attention would tell you is actually our second issue.

You see, we here at Wizard Entertainment decided earlier this year to experiment with a special edition on anime, and that became the ANIME INVASION magazine a lot of you read in July. Or, I should say, a lot of you read and *loved*. Due to the overwhelmingly positive response we got, we quickly knew we'd done something right. The result? ANIME INVASION is now a regular quarterly magazine!

You may think this is just a boring rah-rah speech, but here's where you should start paying attention. You see, we've revamped the magazine based on your comments on the special, and we want to hear from you again. We need you to send us mail with the following thoughts:

1. What did you hate about this magazine? We love to hear compliments, but when you tell us what you *didn't* like, we can fix it. Think there's too little coverage of *Pokémon* (not!) or *Vampire Hunter D*? Let us know! Don't care about our Internet department? Our TV section? Put it in writing!

2. You may think you can tell us what you liked also. Some of us are insecure and need to hear it.

3. Send us your anime artwork and costume photographs! We'll start running a fan art/cosplay section next issue, and who knows—you could be the star attraction!

You can contact us at AniMail, c/o Wizard Entertainment, 151 Wells Ave, Congers, NY 10920, or you can e-mail us at AnimeInvasion@aol.com whenever you like.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Douglas Goldstein
Editor, ANIME INVASION

MASTHEAD

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INVASION AMERICA

Here it is—**BAM!**—the first issue of the now-quarterly **ANIME INVASION!** Now that we're gonna show up on a regular basis, it makes perfect sense to start a letters column, don'tcha think?

We got a truckload of letters from faithful otaku (that's anime fans, for you uninitiated) about our **ANIME INVASION** special edition that came out last summer, but we need more... lots more. So seek out the address at the end of this here column and hit us with anything ya got—burning questions, insightful comments, screaming hissy fits, etc. Anime fans are the most opinionated people on planet Earth, so I just know this section's going to get pretty damn lively in the months to come.

So, onto this month's mighty missives! I'll try to keep the insanity to a minimum, but I can't make any promises.

TAKE THAT, ANGEL USMAIL!

CURSES! WELL, GUESS I'LL BLOW UP NOW.

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DEAR INVASION,

First of all, great mag! The "Top 50 Anime" list in the first special helped me out a lot. But I have a few questions:

a) I'm an avid Ranma

1/2 fan, and I've been looking everywhere to find out just how long the series is.

First of all, how many episodes are there? And, how long is the manga (in parts)?

b) Are there any plans to release the entire Lupin III series on DVD?

c) Lastly, is there a bigger bee-yotch than Sieta's aunt in *Grave of the Fireflies*? I hate that lady!

Josh Sadwal

bluddymonkey2@aol.com

a) Ranma 1/2 ran 161 episodes from 1988-1992, plus 11 OVAs (straight-to-tape "original video animations") and three theatrically released movies since the TV series ended. There's still a ways to go before Viz runs out of it here in the U.S.

Thirty-eight volumes of the manga were published in Japan. Viz doesn't follow those volume breakdowns when reprinting the series here in the States, though.

b) You never know, but it's real doubtful. The series is simply enormous. However, FUNimation, which

HALF-MAN, HALF-WOMAN, ALL DANCE MACHINE.



translates *Dragon Ball Z* for U.S. television, recently secured the rights to the last 10 Lupin movies for American distribution. DVDs of at least those 10 seem likely.

c) What about Kyle's mom?

DEAR ANIME GURUS,

Okay, what exactly does the "sweatdrop" signify?

And do you guys like Pocky? I mean pocky + anime = sugar-fueled fun! In case you don't know, Pocky is that cracker stick dipped in a number of different flavored coatings. And might I say, it rocks. "Bumpy Strawberry" is my favorite flavor.

John Gonglewski
Scranton, PA

As you can probably tell from the

context, that anime "sweat-drop" appears on the heads of characters during moments of embarrassment, distress or awkward silences. It's cartoon shorthand, the same way stars appear around Goofy's head when he gets



bashed with a hammer. Which is far too infrequently, if you ask me.

Gilles Poitras' excellent book *The Anime Companion* makes the cultural observation that Japanese consider

OTAKU'S BLACK BOOK



HEY, OTAKU FREAKS!

Write to us here at "Letters from the Front," 410 Avenue du Commerce, 151 West Ave., Congers, NY 10920, or get with the times and e-mail us at animeinvasion@aol.com. And hey, we also want letters or we know anime fans draw the best, and we want to show off the best you've got, along with the best coplayers. Thanks, yoi!

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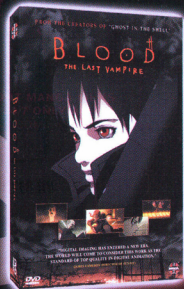
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themselves a "wet" society, placing importance on feelings, while Americans live in a "dry" society of reason. Anime's gushing tears, "snot" in a character's nose as they sleep and the trademark sweatdrop are reflections of this. Make of that what you will.

And everyone should try Pocky at least once. There are even Pocky clubs springing up online, which should really surprise no one. Join the revolution, kids.

DEAR ANIME INVASION,

Hey, if all this stuff is done in Japan and for a mainly Japanese audience, then why do they all look "white"? Oh, and what's with all the grunting?

Tom Slick
megOhulk@aol.com

White people have enormous eyes and day-glo hair? If that was true, Ohio would be a lot more fun.

DEAR SIR OR MADAM,

I've been watching anime for a long, long time. About as long as I've been watching Godzilla. So I was wondering...how come both of these two awesome "energies" haven't been merged into one being? I mean, come on, anime and Godzilla are the biggest things going in Japan! Think about it! Although anime has been around a lot longer than the Big G, I think there should be at least one Godzilla anime! I reach out to all the other anime Godzilla fans out there! Let your voices be heard! Let there be a Godzilla anime! Right on!

John Benton
eyeofthezombie@earthlink.net

What, you mean Hanna-Barbera's crapstorm The Godzilla Power Hour wasn't good enough for you? C'mon, man...Godzooky was the Jar Jar Binks of his time.



DEAR ANIME INVASION,

Anime is cool...they need more anime...if anime was a food, it would be my favorite food...I like anime.

René Lemos
surge87@ureach.com

Uh...huh.

DEAR ANIME INVASION,

When is Inu-Yasha coming to America on video?

Patricia Green
ferbus5@msn.com

Good news! U.S. audiences will definitely see Inu-Yasha in the near

future, but the exact format has yet to be determined. Our old pal Dallas Middaugh, Viz Communications' director of sales and marketing, explains: "We're currently in the process of trying to see if we can get it onto television, which is the main thing that's going to determine the release. We definitely do plan to release that anime in 2002."

Inu-Yasha, for the uninitiated, is the latest in a long line of animated series based on the work of manga goddess Rumiko Takahashi, the creator of Urusei Yatsura, Maison Ikkoku and Ranna 1/2. Middaugh, for one, is already singing its praises. "It's beautiful," he says of the anime. "It's some of Takahashi's best work. The animation is just stunning. I'm really excited about the prospect for it."

HEY, ANIME INVASION!

My favorite anime is *Record of Lodoss War*—ya know, big swords, magic and a whole bunch of cool stuff!

So what's your favorite anime?

COSPLAY CAVALCADE!

WHEN A T-SHIRT ISN'T ENOUGH

Alright, otaku—here's your chance to dress up and shine! In every issue of *Anime Invasion*, we'll highlight the best Cosplayer who sends in a photo of him/her/themselves dressed as their favorite characters. This month, we lead with Spridle and Chim-Chim, the candy-addicted trunk flunkies from *Speed Racer*, as portrayed by Curtis Thompson and Derek Videll at this year's Otakon convention in Baltimore. Send your pics, along with your names, who you're portraying and how you made the costume to "Cosplay Cavalcade," c/o *Anime Invasion*, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920. We're waiting...



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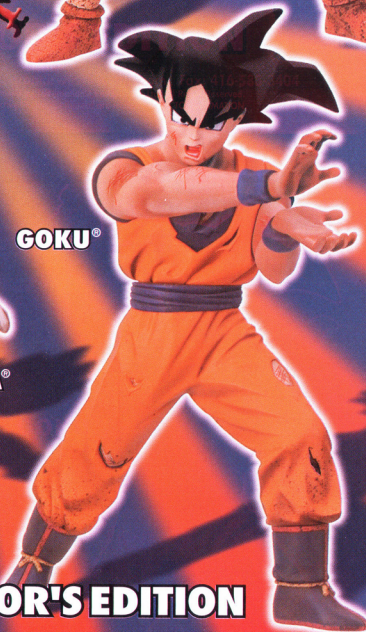
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ANIMAIL!

Umm...anybody can answer...I don't care if it's a member of the team or some bum off the street. It's always cool to know what stuff other people are into.

Ted Park
 thewoodcon@aol.com

The ANIME INVASION editorial staff counts Nausicaa of the Valley of Wind, Ninja Scroll, G-Force and Urusei Yatsura among its favorites. This brief opinion poll consisted of me wandering around the office distracting people from their real work, so I don't know how scientific it was. They might have just said the first thing that came to mind so I'd leave them alone.

My personal favorite is Castle of Cagliostro.

The wino that sleeps at the bus stop down the road a ways said he'd trade me a half-bottle of Mad Dog for a copy of La Blue Girl.

DEAR ANIME WIZARDS,

As we all well know, Cartoon Network's Toonami has been airing the original *Mobile Suit Gundam* series. Recently, I've been hearing rumors circulating

around the 'Net that Toonami representatives are unhappy with the ratings they've been receiving from the 20-year-old classic. Something along the lines of ratings being down 42 percent from what was in *Gundam*'s time slot last year, which of course was reruns of *Dragon Ball Z*. What I've ultimately heard was that, due to the poor rating, this will be the first and last time they air the full series of *Mobile Suit Gundam*. Such a sad occurrence for a great anime series. I don't know whether you guys can confirm this or not, but it would be nice to know.

Todd Padzensky
 Jeditrickster@hotmail.com

"Never say never," a Cartoon Network representative tells me. (Ooh! The intrigue!) The show was taken off the air with five episodes left to go following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, but even after those final episodes run, Mobile Suit Gundam isn't over. "I don't think it's fair to say that we'd never show it again in its entirety," the source continues, hinting that



the network's Midnight Run block might be a more suitable home for the series. If you want more info on Gundam on Toonami, there's news on page 14 that you might find interesting...

That just about wraps it up! Make sure to drop us a line with any questions or comments. I expect to get bitched out plenty. I also expect to get letters from folks who want to start trading tapes with the wino. Leave him alone, folks. He's had a hard life.

—Tom Root

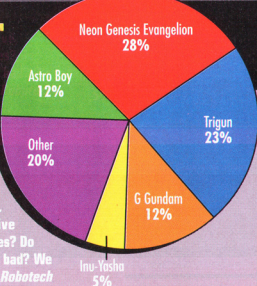
Tom Root's winter project: turn his 10-speed bike into Tetsuo's motorcycle, no matter how many rolls of aluminum foil it takes.

WEB POLL

YOUR THOUGHTS, REDUCED TO NUMBERS

What anime TV series would you like most to air on television?

It doesn't seem that big a surprise that the cult hit *Evangelion*, with its psychologically damaged 14-year-olds and their extension-cord-bearing giant robots, leads the pack. It's been a hit since it was released in Japan in 1995. But what's up with the ethnically insensitive goof-fest that is *G Gundam* getting so many votes? Do you all really want to see Tequila *Gundam* that bad? We assure you you don't. In the "Others" category, *Robotech* and *Ranna 1/2* were frequent suggestions. ■ **RB**



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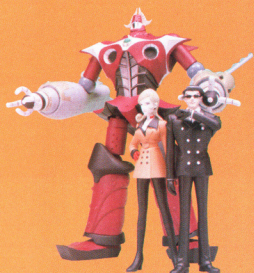
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INVASION REPORT

BUZZ, BLURBS AND BITS
ABOUT THE WORLD OF ANIME

EYE OF THE TOONAMI!

Inside the mind of Cartoon Network's anime king

It's a good time for anime fans. Sean Akins is making it a good time.

As creative director for Toonami, Cartoon Network's action-packed, anime-laden afternoon programming block, Akins has spent the last five years turning Japanese animation from a cult obsession into mainstream pop phenomenon. But now that anime has hit so big, anime fans are going crazy to get their favorite anime series on the air in the U.S.—petition sites fill the Internet, demanding that Toonami present their beloved show.

As Akins explains, it's a delicate process. "There are standards we have to adhere to because there are 6 and 8-year-olds watching, and we can't show them anything too crazy." A huge anime fan himself, there's no end to the shows Akins wants to show the world. But his desire is tempered by two things: FCC standards and his commitment to be as faithful to the original shows as possible.

"Our goal from the beginning was to preserve the integrity of the originals," says Akins, passionately. "Some things we can't show, but we want to do it in a way that preserves the story." With the exception of *Dragon Ball Z*, Toonami does all its own editing. "This is what separates us from the others. No one else goes to lengths we go to. We ran *Gundam Wing* with the Japanese titles. No one could read it. It was totally awesome! Why do you want to have a show that's got all this great stuff and dumb it down?" But what Akins loves, he also wants to put on the air: "We like *Escaflowne* and it's still possible—the movie just blew me away. *Kikkaido* we're looking at... *Samurai X* is great. *Nadesico* we think is a good show. *Evangelion* is incredible...it's such a great show, but it's just a little too much. Maybe someday we'll do it at midnight.

"I think giant robots are the coolest thing ever," he continues. "Anything with giant robots has a good chance of getting on Toonami." Clearly, we're in good hands.

While the far future of Toonami has yet to be determined, the outlook looks good. Toonami is debuting two new anime shows this November—*Mobile Suit Gundam 0080: War in the Pocket*, the next installment of the beloved Gundam series, and *Zoids*, the newest cartoon incarnation of the Japanese classic. Shown in Japan in 1999, *Zoids* uses state-of-the-art 3D computer graphics with 2D cel animation in a traditional tale of good, evil and giant robot/ships shaped like animals. Otaku will also have a reason to tune in to Cartoon Network on Saturdays, as Toonami will premiere both the *Sailor Moon R* and *Sailor Moon Super S* movies.

Good times indeed. ■ Robert Bricken

TOONAMI'S "TOON": RIGHT, GUNDAIM 0080



HOLD THE 2

New Dragon Ball action figures for young Goku

As hardcore *Dragon Ball Z* fans know, Goku had a whole series of adventures before the *Z* saga started, a series chronicled in *Dragon Ball*, recently released on Cartoon Network. In March of 2002, I'll Goku and his buddies get their first action figures since 1995 with a series of two-packs, including Goku and the bullying rabbit Monster Carrot, Emperor Pilaf with the dog-ninja Shao, and a pack of the young Bulma and the still-old Master Roshi.

These *Dragon Ball* toys will be made by IF Labs, a new toy company formed by FUNimation (holder of the *Dragon Ball* license) and Irwin Toy (who make the *DBZ* toys). IF Labs will also produce figures for *Yu Yu Hakusho*, as well as a line of collector's edition *DBZ* figures. Based on *DBZ* movies, the first wave consists of the evil Lord Slug and Cooler, and Battle Damaged Super Saiyan Goku and Piccolo. Look for them in January. ■ **RB**



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EVERYBODY SAY "HAYAO!"

A comparative guide to the films of Master Miyazaki

Hayao Miyazaki's anime films are widely regarded as international masterpieces. But we've noticed many...similarities in his beloved works. ■ **Zach Oat**

HIS FILMS	YOUNG FEMALE LEAD	YOUNG MALE LEAD	ETERNAL SYMBOL OF NATURE	HARMLESS NATURE SPIRITS	CUTE ANIMAL SIDEKICK
NAUSICÄA OF THE VALLEY OF THE WIND	Young princess Nausicaä 	Young prince Asbel	The polluted forest	The maggot-like Ohmu 	Teto (fox/squirrel)
LAPUTA: CASTLE IN THE SKY	Young orphan girl Sheeta	14-year-old orphan boy Pazu 	Laputa's great tree	None	None
MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO	10-year-old girl Satsuki	10-year-old neighbor boy Kanta	The camphor tree	The laughter-hating Dustbunnies	The Totoro creatures 
KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE	13-year-old witch Kiki 	Young boy Tombo	None	A flock of mischievous crows	Jiji (talking cat)
PRINCESS MONONOKE	Young spirit princess San	Young Prince Ashitaka	Shishi, great god of the forest	The eerie, rattling Kodama	Yakkuru (gazelle) 

INVASIONREPORT

ASAMIYA LEAVING JAPAN

Famed manga artist packs his bags for America

Japan's newest export will not be a car or lovable pocket monsters. Instead, they're sending us one of their favorite sons.

Fan-favorite artist Kia Asamiya is leaving the shrinking manga market in Tokyo to move to the United States next year. The acclaimed creator of such popular titles as *Martian Successor Nadesico*, *Silent Möbius* and *Corrector Yui* plans to relocate to San Diego, Calif., just in time for Comic-Con International in August, which he plans to attend.

"I've been thinking about moving for a long time now," explained the reclusive artist, who visited New York City this summer. "I've grown tired with the hustle and bustle of Tokyo. Besides, I'm starting to do a lot more work in the U.S. and physically being in America may facilitate that."

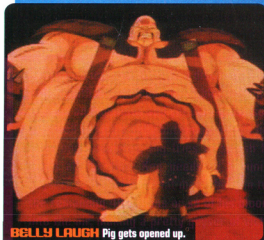


Asamiya, who once earned praise from George Lucas for his artistry on a manga adaptation of *Star Wars: Episode I*, is set to draw a *Star Wars* story for Dark Horse about how Darth Vader and Boba Fett first met. The 38-year-old has also finished issues 4, 5 and 6 of *Dark Angel: Phoenix Resurrection* for Image Comics, and he's drawn four covers of *Titans* for DC Comics, who also plans to publish an English adaptation of Asamiya's Japanese *Batman* graphic novel next spring.

But before he makes his final move, Asamiya is busy organizing a charity drive in the Japanese comics industry to benefit the victims of the Sept. 11 tragedies. "It's so sad what happened," he lamented. "I want to do what I can to help." ■ **Mel Caylo**

DEATH OF THE MONTH

PIG FROM FIST OF THE NORTH STAR



BELLY LAUGH Pig gets opened up.

Known for its super-violence and the high blood pressure of its characters (people's blood shoots several feet from every cut, gash and scrapel, Streamline Pictures' 1980s release *Fist of the North Star* is a classic.

Ken and his companion Rei wander the post-apocalyptic wasteland, looking to kill Ken's brother Jagi. They find his fat

bodyguard instead. After Ken discovers the fat man's body is too soft to punch with his special "head-blowing-up-with-one-punch" power, he devises an ingenious and yet very gross solution—Ken uses his martial arts skill to kick a belly button onto Pig's belly. As the bodyguard's flesh folds and undulates, Pig tries to smush his gut back into shape, but that's all the time Ken needs to administer a lethal punch. Hemogeyers erupt from the fat man's belly in two places, he falls over, then the remaining 40 gallons or so of his blood flows vertically straight up into the air, making a pretty geyser of victory for Ken. ■ **RB**

RIISING FUN

What's hot in Japan

HOT IN THE MOVIES: *Cowboy Bebop*, the funkiest anime ever, gets the big-screen treatment in *knockin' on heaven's door*, a continuation of the *Cowboy Bebop* story set on Mars. Unfortunately, it still can't upset *Spirited Away*, Hayao Miyazaki's latest.

HOT ON TV: *Noir* is making a real impact. As the title suggests, this "film noir"-influenced tale of two assassins in France is well-paced, stunningly animated and mysterious enough to be a favorite for years to come.

HOT IN TOYS: JoJo's Bizarre Adventure two-packs from Kotobukiya feature characters from the long-running, generation-spanning comic series, complete with their "Stands," or psychic alter-egos.

HOT IN VIDEO GAMES: With fans pre-ordering copies more than a month in advance, it was inevitable that *Final Fantasy X* would sell a gazillion copies within hours of its release. ■ **Kumar Sivasubramanian**



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Trained to kill...

Trained to follow

YOUR directions...



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INVASIONREPORT

SPEEDLINES

LITTLE BITTY BUZZ BITS TO CHEW ON



HEIDI

YODELIN' IN THE VALLEY

Japanese interest in the anime version of *Heidi* has turned into a huge boost in tourism for the Swiss Alps. Last year, over 150,000 Japanese tourists visited Zermatt, where it's estimated that one-sixth of the summer population is Japanese.

TOP HEAVY

Details are still sketchy, but animation studio GAINAX has announced that a sequel to *Gunbuster: Top O Nerae* is in the works. No release date is set, but it's being rumored the project will be directed by Kazuya Tsurumaki with character design by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto.

EATING OUT

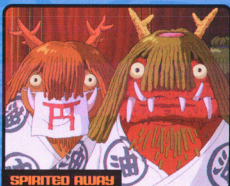
The voice actresses from *Sakura Taisen* are holding a series of dinner shows in Japan at the end of the year. Fans who shell out the 28,000 yen ticket price get the chance to eat dinner and socialize with the performers.



SAKURA TAISEN

BEBOP STOP

Cowboy Bebop recently got its own official English-language Website at www.cowboybebop.com/english, where fans can read the CB prequel *Ural Terpsichore*. But before fans get too happy, *Bebop* director Shinichiro Watanabe has stated that he's not interested in continuing the series.



SPIRITED AWAY

ANIMEO ICEBERG

Director Hayao Miyazaki's animated film *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi* (Spirited Away) reached 16.88 million viewers in just the first 69 days of release in Japan, breaking a national record and exceeding even *Titanic*'s numbers for the same time frame.

Adam Patsky

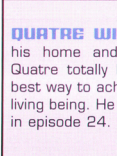
GUNDAM GONE MAD!

How you know your Gundam Wing pilot is crazy

When *Gundam Wing* debuted, everyone thought it was going to be the story of five guys who kicked ass, displayed some drama and drove big robots. No one knew that they were as crazy as loons, as well. Here's the highlight reel of their insanity. **Wes Keller**



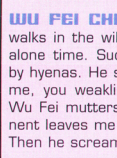
DUO MAXWELL Let's face it: with his cheerful attitude and rare common sense, Duo is probably the most well-balanced and amiable of all the *Gundam Wing* pilots. But starting around episode 23 or so, he goes around screaming that he's the God of Death. And he is. But he's a cheerful and friendly God of Death.



QUATRE WINNER After the loss of his home and family in episode 21, Quatre totally loses it and decides the best way to achieve peace is to kill every living being. He blows up an entire colony in episode 24.



TROWA BARTON Barton, one of the most skilled warriors in the galaxy, decides to hide out as a circus clown. And when he gets amnesia, he forgets about being a *Gundam* pilot but remembers his carnage skills.



WU FEI CHANG Episode 4: Wu Fei walks in the wilderness, enjoying a little alone time. Suddenly, he is surrounded by hyenas. He screams, "Get away from me, you weaklings!" The hyenas leave. Wu Fei mutters, "Fighting a weak opponent leaves me feeling so empty inside." Then he screams. *Right on!*

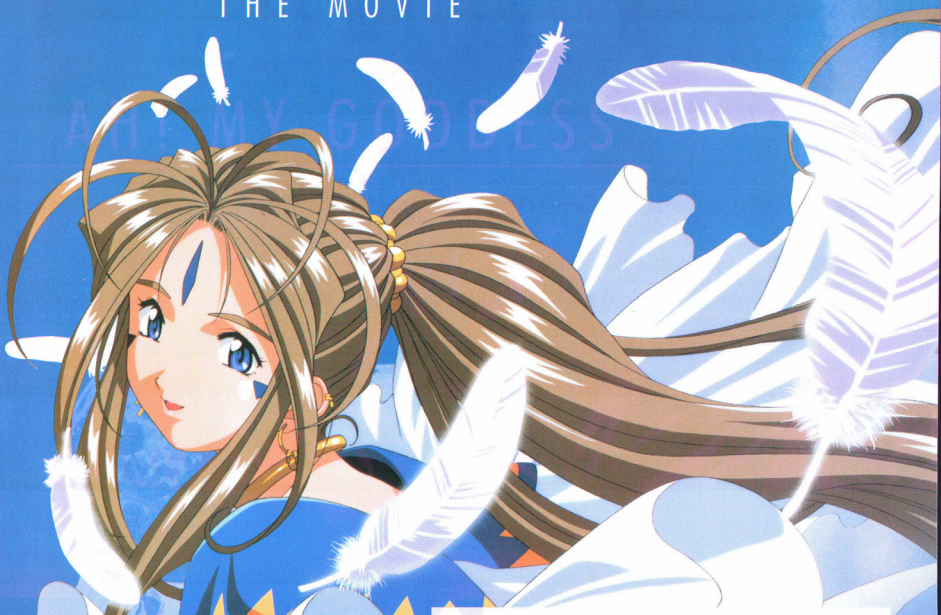


HEERO YUY Our hero begins the first episode of the show by trying unsuccessfully to kill himself. He then kills several paramedics who rush out to help him, steals their ambulance and then, after being invited to a birthday party for the most popular girl in school, whispers gently in her ear: "I'll kill you." Not bad for the first episode.

AH! MY GODDESS

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REANIMATED

CLASSIC ANIME FROM DAYS OF YORE

BATTLE OF THE PLANETS

G-Force! Princess...Tiny...Keyop...Mark...Jason...fearless young orphans protecting Earth's entire galaxy ...always five, acting as one...dedicated ...inseparable...invincible!"

In 1972, Japan's Tatsunoko Productions and manga artist Tatsuo Yoshida, the same team responsible for the '60s hit *Mach Go Go Go (Speed Racer)*, created *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman*. The series took place in the year 2003, when Earth suddenly comes under siege by Galactor, a worldwide criminal organization armed with advanced weaponry and masterminded by "Controller X," an intelligence from outer space. To combat Galactor, Professor Kozaburo Nambu of the International Science Organization unleashed his secret defense project: the Science Ninja Team Gatchaman!

Comprised of five specially trained and physically enhanced young people garbed in bird-like uniforms, each Gatchaman team member piloted his own vehicle and had customized

weapons and an individual "bird" persona. G-1 was Ken, the Eagle, the team's leader. G-2 was Joe, the Condor. G-3, June the Swan, was the team's only female member. Jinpei the Swallow, G-4, was the youngest teammate. Rounding out the formidable quintet was Ryu the Horned Owl, G-5, who piloted the team's massive airship, the Phoenix. Their main nemesis was Berg Katse, Galactor's Earth commander. Each week, the Gatchaman force battled Katse and his latest scheme to claim Earth.

It may sound pretty formulaic, but the show's popularity stemmed from how often it broke the mold. The main characters were given real depth, making them more than just "cookie-cutter" heroes. The team didn't always achieve a clean victory. And in the climactic final episodes, a dying Joe sacrificed himself to stop Controller X's apocalyptic "Black Hole Operation!" The series concluded with Katse's suicide, Controller X escaping into space, the Gatchaman team minus a member and Professor Nambu proclaiming that "evil such as Galactor can be hidden in the hearts of anyone." It ended its run in 1974, after a whopping 105 episodes.


The response to *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman* was tremendous, almost guaranteeing some kind of follow-up: four years later, Gatchaman had a sort of double-rebirth on both sides of the Pacific.

In 1978, an unprecedented sci-fi boom hit, due to the success of *Star Wars* the year before. Tatsunoko responded with *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman II*, a 52-episode sequel airing from October 1978 to September 1979. U.S. TV executive Sandy Frank felt he could capitalize on the current craze with a space-oriented cartoon show. He came across *Gatchaman* and purchased the rights from Tatsunoko, then set about "Americanizing" the series. This was no small task. *Gatchaman*'s adult-oriented drama, violence and risqué themes meant extensive editing would be needed to make the show acceptable to the American kiddie cartoon market. Also, Frank wanted his show to be a star-spanning space opera, ala *Star Wars*, and all of *Gatchaman*'s action was Earth-bound. Both of these problems were solved rather neatly with the insertion of new animated footage produced here. To make up for all the deleted scenes and resulting narrative gaps, a new character was created, the robot 7-Zark-7. He filled in the blanks, either onscreen or in a voice-over narration, and it didn't hurt that he vaguely resembled R2-D2. Other new scenes portraying space travel were added, allowing the show to have the intergalactic scope

END BRWS The Gatchaman team has been saving the East and the West for nearly 30 years.



Frank wanted [even if all the other planets seemed strangely Earth-like.] All in all, Frank's production company spent about \$4,500,000 repackaging *Gatchaman* for U.S. TV. A total of 85 episodes, culled from the original 105, made up this version. Retitled *Battle of the Planets*, it premiered in September 1978. Even in this watered-down form, the exploits of G-Force caught on quickly with American audiences, becoming a cult favorite and initiating the next big wave of anime to hit the States, including *Starblazers* and *Voltron*. Back in Japan, the *Gatchaman* saga continued, with *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman F* (for "Fighter"), which ran for 48 episodes, from 1979-80.

By the mid-'80s, *Battle of the Planets* had all but disappeared from U.S. television. A few years later, Turner Network produced another English version of *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman*. Called simply *G-Force*, this redux was actually closer in spirit to the original, since there was no additional U.S. footage and it was less-censored than the Japanese version. *G-Force* used basically the same 85 episodes as *BOTP* (with a few exceptions) but never achieved much of a following. Maybe it was because of the ridiculously silly new names the characters were saddled with (see sidebar), or maybe it was the decision to underscore everything on the soundtrack with an awful, synthesized drum beat. Even in the mid-'90s, when Saban Entertainment released *Eagle Riders*, a dubbed pastiche of *Gatchaman II* and *Gatchaman F* episodes, there was very little U.S. interest. For most, *Battle of the Planets* remains the best-loved and definitive English adaptation of *Kagaku Ninjatai Gatchaman*. 

G-6 freelance writer Bob Marshall, the Puffin, was specially trained to wash our cars. Special thanks to Phil Oldham of Sandy Frank Productions and Lana Berman at Rhino.

KNOW YOUR GATCHAMAN

WHO'S CALLED WHAT IN WHICH VERSION



1

1. KEN (BOTP "Mark"; GF "Ace Goodheart"; ER "Hunter Harris") Ken is the stalwart hero. Dubbed episodes lessen the sub-plot of Ken's connection with mysterious pilot Red Impulse, later revealed to be his father.



2

2. JOE (BOTP "Jason"; GF "Dirk Daring"; ER "Joe Thax") A moody loner, Joe is motivated by vengeance (Galactor murdered his parents). All versions maintain his hot-headed attitude, but only the original explores his tragic hero's persona.



3

3. JUNE (BOTP "Princess"; GF "Agatha (Aggie) June"; ER "Kelly") The team's technical expert (and eye candy), June is quite self-reliant, running a restaurant on the side. The dubbed versions downplay her independence, as well as her convoluted relationship with Ken (and Joe).




4

4. JINPEI (BOTP "Keyop"; GF "Pee Wee"; ER "Mickey") Jinpei got royally screwed in *BOTP*—he was stripped of almost all dialogue and just warbled. He's a perfectly normal 10-year-old who views the team as his family.



5

5. RYU (BOTP "Tiny"; GF "Hoodo (Hootie)"; ER "Ollie") Ryu's probably the least-altered teammate. Tough and with a heart of gold, he would do anything for his friends. In *Gatchaman*, he's the only one with any living family (aside from the Ken/Red Impulse thing). 

FOR THE BIRDS

GETTING THE BEST GATCHAMAN GEAR




Can't get enough *G-Force* in your life? Here's a look at some current and upcoming items that will keep any consumer-minded *Battle of the Planets* fan satisfied.

BOTP DVD & VHS Woo-Hoo! At last, the original English versions! Volumes 1 and 2 are available now, with 3 and 4 following in early 2002. The DVDs also feature the original *Gatchaman* episodes subtitled (so you can see the cut-out violence) and the

other redone version, *G-Force*! That's three versions of each episode! From Rhino Entertainment. VHS \$9.95 DVD \$19.95

BOTP SOUNDTRACK CD Listen at home to the cool music from *Kagaku Ninjatai Gatchaman*, as well as the themes specifically created for the English version. Available now from Super Tracks for \$14.99.

T-SHIRTS Now you can have G-Force's "Firebird" insignia proudly plastered on your own chest, or the classic "G" logo, if you prefer. These two shirts are available exclusively from Dynamic Forces at \$17.99 a pop.

BOTP TRADING CARDS Another Dynamic Forces exclusive, due out early next year. Over 70 cards feature characters and scenes from *BOTP*. Be on the lookout for chase and sketch cards! Individual packs will contain eight cards each and sell for \$1.99. 



PAT LEE
JAMES RAIZ
R. SUNGA

LAST MAN STANDING

A BATTLE YOU THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER SEE

VAMPIRE HUNTER D VS. SAYA



Dunpeal

ORIGIN OF POWER

Unknown

Freelancer

EMPLOYER

Government

Wide-brimmed hat

FASHION STATEMENT

Sailor Suit

AB+

BLOOD TYPE

O-



Saya

D BIO: Born of the forbidden union between a human and a vampire, D has pledged to eradicate all vampires from his apocalyptic Earth. Besides his incredible swordsmanship and strength augmented by his vampiric heritage, D's left hand is possessed by a powerful demon.

SAYA BIO: Little is known about Saya. She has reportedly been spotted in 1966 and 2000, appearing to be the same age. Saya is employed to destroy "Chiropterans"—vampire-like beings that have the ability to change shape. She is merciless with her Japanese katana sword.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

D rides silently through the deserted town as the wind whistles through broken windows and the street lamps flicker uneasily. His black horse snorts nervously as it steps along the cobble streets. D stops, sensing danger; and discovers it an instant before a sword would have cleaved him in two. He has enough time to dodge slightly, so the katana only bites deeply into his left shoulder.

D leaps off his horse, clutching his wound, to see a young girl staring at him with implacable hatred. She wears an odd dress, contrasting with the bloody weapon she holds. The girl snarls as she lunges at D again.

Even seeing the blade coming, D scrambles to draw his own sword and parry the lightning-fast blow. *Her skill is beyond that of a human*, thinks D.

Gritting her teeth, Saya strikes again and again. The sound of blade against blade echoes in the street. "Die, Chiropteran!" she shouts, swinging with absolute precision.

With another flurry of blade work, the two bounce apart

for a moment's respite. Saya looks slightly frustrated. "Why don't you transform?!" she demands.

"I am not that which you seek," says D quietly.

"Liar!" She raises her katana in a battle stance and charges again.

D holds his palm to the girl. The demon opens his mouth wide, drawing in gargantuan winds. Saya is taken off guard, almost falling to the ground, but she recovers instantly and uses the pull to charge D at top speed. D's eyes widen, knowing he's totally unable to block the blow, but maybe...

D twists, and Saya's lunge neatly slices off his demon hand; the winds stop. But with the girl so off-balance, D slides his sword into her stomach.

Saya cries out and falls to the street.

THE WINNAH:

D stands for a minute, leaning on his sword, panting. Then he walks over to Saya, picking up his hand and holding it to his wrist; it begins slowly reattaching itself.

Saya stares at D, cold hate in her eyes. D says simply, "If you are what I think you are, you'll heal, in time." D hoists himself back onto his horse, leaving Saya in a spreading pool of blood. "You have much work to do. But not with me."

"I'll find you again...and...kill you..." she mutters weakly.

D doesn't answer as he rides through the town and into the dark plains beyond.

Are there any titanic anime matchups you'd like to see on these pages? Let us know at Animalnvasion@aol.com now!

Toynami and Anime Invasion Present the
SUPER VERITECH
CONTEST



THE SUPER VERITECH CONTEST

GRAND PRIZE (1) One lucky reader will win a 1/12-scale Super Scale Veritech (with a limited, numbered Plaque of Authenticity) that stands at approximately 5 feet tall and is valued at over \$3000! As if that weren't enough, our friends at Toynami will also throw in a complete set of both the Robotech Poseable Figures and the Super Veritech Super-Deformed Morphers.

SECOND PRIZE (3) Three winners will receive complete sets of both the Robotech Poseable Figures and the Super Veritech Super-Deformed Morphers.

THIRD PRIZE (5) Five fans will win a set of Super Veritech Super Deformed Morphers.

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**DRAGON
BALL**

DRAGON BALL UNCUT

BY CHRIS PSAROS

WHAT THEY WOULDN'T DARE SHOW YOU ON AMERICAN TV

FUNimation knew that *Dragon Ball Z* could be a hit in America. The problem was that it was chock-full of stuff that cannot be shown on American TV: nudity, extreme violence—elements that are acceptable and fun for Japanese audiences of all ages, but too much for American kiddies.

So to make *DBZ* [and its predecessor *Dragon Ball*] okay for our tender eyes, a lot had to be cut, even on cable. That's right—when you watch your *DB* and *DBZ*, you're not getting the whole picture.

So what exactly are you missing? Sit down with a cold beer—no, better make that water—and find out.

BLOODY AND BRUTAL

You don't make an action show without violence, and *Dragon Ball Z* is one of the greatest action shows of all time. As a result, plenty of violent scenes have had to be trimmed throughout *DBZ*. In fact, in the first two seasons, to meet requirements for syndication, all blood had to be censored! Thankfully, characters can bleed all they want on cable (the only stipulation being that the blood cannot "spurt or flow"). But there's still some stuff that can't be shown on American TV at all...



CLEANING UP (left) During the first two seasons, editing out all blood could be an incredible amount of work. As the original battle between Goku and then-villain Vegeta came to a head, for example, every character involved was utterly caked

with blood. But all of it had to be removed for the dub, and the cleaned-up shots look downright eerie to those accustomed to the original Japanese version.

GOODBYE, GULDO Early in the Frieza Saga, Vegeta fights a minor bad guy named Guldo. When Vegeta blasts Guldo with an energy beam to the neck, Guldo falls over. When he's blasted in the original, his head pops from his shoulders and falls to the ground, his lifeless body following seconds later; his blood seeping onto the ground. Digital paint was at work in these shots, keeping the head on Guldo's shoulders.

FRIEZA'S DEATH There was more to the evil Frieza's defeat at the young Saiyan Trunks' hands than was shown here. In the dub, all we get is a few shots of Trunks swinging his sword and an energy blast, with no view of Frieza. The original has it a little differently—first, we see Trunks cut Frieza's body into two halves, then Trunks dices the halves into tiny pieces, and finally obliterates the pieces into nothingness with an energy blast. Excessive, but very cool.

YAMCHA VS. ANDROIDS Goku's buddy Yamcha's initial encounter with the Androids was pretty brutal in either version, but what you didn't see were the shots of Android #20 impaling Yamcha through the chest with his bare hand.

HELLIN CRUELTY During the Frieza Saga, Goku's friend Krillin was stabbed through the stomach, which American audiences actually did get to see. But we missed Frieza bouncing him up and down on his horn, and Krillin's blood splashing on the faces of his horrified comrades.

BRUSHES WITH DEATH

Likewise, in the days of syndication, death could not be mentioned or even hinted at! This was a problem, because most of the characters of *DBZ* die at one point or another. In order to meet broadcast standards, it made for some embarrassingly awkward editing and dialogue when character deaths occurred. Now that *DBZ* is on cable, characters can legitimately die. Which is good, because there's plenty of death still coming up for Goku and his friends.



OUT OF PHASE (left) Early in *DBZ*, Goku beats Raditz only by sacrificing himself. Because Goku could not legally die in syndication, he—and the other characters who died afterward—supposedly “phased into another dimension,” and their bodies vanished. Of course, the “other dimension” was King Kai’s planet, where Goku trained. In the original, this is simply the afterlife.

PULL THE CHUTE Logic broke after Nappa, Vegeta’s evil partner, blew up a helicopter full of people after he first arrived on Earth. In syndication, it had to be covered up—the scene shifts to Tien, who shouts, “Look! I can see their parachutes! They’re OK!” They weren’t okay. They were dead.



WHAT THE HFIL? (left) After Goku died fighting Cell, he visited the offices of the Underworld, staffed by monsters who wore shirts labeled “HFIL.” It stands for “Home For Infinite Losers” in the dub, the place where the villains Frieza, Cell and others go after they’ve been killed. In the Japanese version, these are the Ogres who run Hell, where the villains appropriately go when they die. The shirts got digitally edited. (Note that it’s okay for characters to die, and it’s okay for Bugs Bunny to meet the Devil, but it’s not okay to say bad people go to Hell when they die. The FCC is weird.)

THE NAKED TRUTH

Even in shows geared at children, the Japanese don’t have the same hang-ups about naked bodies and sexuality that Americans do. But in the U.S., in syndication and on cable, nudity is a no-go. Unfortunately, *DBZ* and *Dragon Ball* (in particular) have a lot of both, as characters have a tendency to just let it all hang out.



COVER UP

In *DB*, Goku is almost constantly nude. Undies are often digitally added and in one shot, action lines were used to cover his crotch.

There was even a shot or two of a fully adult Goku’s rear end during *DBZ*, cut from the dub. Gohan, Vegeta and even Bulma have occasionally appeared nude throughout *DB* and *DBZ*; in each case,



something has been digitally added to cover it up, or the scene has been removed entirely.

FIGHTING DIRTY In *Dragon Ball*’s World Tournament storyline, the stoic Namu fights the alluring Ran Fuan. Americans didn’t get to see Ran Fuan’s fighting technique: stripping down to her bra and panties to distract Namu. In the original, Namu closes his eyes to beat her; in the dub, the scene is deleted, and Ran is knocked senseless.

BOYS AND GIRLS There is one particularly unfortunate loss in *Dragon Ball*, because it happens to be one of the funniest running gags in the series. It begins when Goku asks Bulma why she has “a butt on her chest,” at which point she explains to him that there are “differences” between boys and girls. Goku, being the innocent soul that he is, has no idea. He decides to investigate these “differences,” and ends up removing Bulma’s panties one night as she sleeps. He is horrified to discover that she’s “missing” a thing or two. Over the next several episodes, Goku is shown performing the “pat-pat test” on the groin area of every new person he comes across, curious to know which ones are boys and which ones are girls. All of these scenes were either rewritten or cut entirely.



PANTY RAIDERS (right) Master Roshi, the martial arts expert, is infinitely more perverted in the original show. He’s constantly grabbing butts, reading girly mags and asking Bulma to show him her “goods.” In the American *Dragon Ball*, Roshi only agrees to give his *Dragon Ball* to Bulma if she’ll show him her belly button. Right? Wrong. He actually insists on seeing her panties. She agrees to the deal and flashes him, but doesn’t know Goku removed her panties the night before. Suffice it to say that Bulma accidentally ends up showing Roshi quite a bit more than she bargained for.



PANTY RAIDERS, PART 2

(right) Oolong, the shape-shifting pig, has a perverted streak of his own. During the scene in *DB* where he decides to escape by turning into a fish and swimming away, Bulma lures him back with a fishing rod, using her panties as bait. In the dub, the underwear are painted over to look like dollar bills. And when Oolong leaps in to intercept Emperor Pilaf’s wish to the Eternal Dragon, he doesn’t call for “the most comfortable underwear in the universe!” but for “the panties off a hot babe!”

DON'T DRINK, DON'T SMOKE

Of course, it’s not just blood, guts and sex that have been taken out. There’s other stuff that’s forbidden by the FCC, to protect the children.

COFFIN NAILS Bulma’s father Dr. Briefs is, in fact, a chain smoker, and doesn’t appear in a single shot without a cigarette in his mouth.

STRAIPSERACH Goku and the *DBZ* gang aren’t afraid of getting naked to get the job done.

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Needless to say, the cigarettes have been painstakingly removed from each and every frame, in every episode.



WATERED DOWN (left) Master Roshi likes beer. But the FCC doesn't want him to have it. Master Roshi's mugs of beer have always been painted blue, presumably to resemble water.

THE NAME GAME

It is an unfortunate tradition in anime dubbed for American broadcast to give characters more "Anglo-friendly" names. Luckily, there's little of this in *DBZ*. In most cases, changes involved simply rearranging names from Japanese to English phonetics ("Kuririn" to "Krillin", "Furiza" to "Frieza") or direct English translations ("Gyuumaou" to "Ox King", "Kame Sennin Mutenroshi" to "Turtle Hermit Master Roshi") However, there are a few notable exceptions...

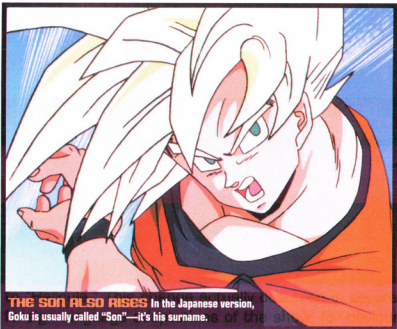


LAUNCH (left) In the original, Launch's name is "Lunch." There's no telling why it was arbitrarily changed to another English word, but let's face it: It's a pretty silly name either way.

HERCULE The loudmouth poser of *DBZ* has the most controversial change of them all. In Japan, he's known as "Mr. Satan." No, he has no satanic ties, he just happens to have this crazy name. Check out his house or the signs of his fans to see where it was digitally changed to "Hercule." This change actually occurred in several foreign language adaptations of the show, for obvious reasons. The name "Hercule" was actually taken from the French dub of the show.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

More than just "objectionable material" has been lost. The initial 35 episodes of *DBZ* were whittled down to 26 in order to complete the first story arc within the time frame of a standard television season. Most of the heavy editing of this type took place during syndication; happily, when *DBZ* hit Cartoon Network, the episodes were presented more or less in their entirety. Here are two episodes that

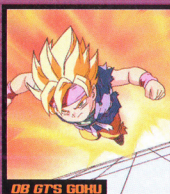


THE SON ALSO RISES In the Japanese version, Goku is usually called "Son"—it's his surname.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

INTRODUCING DRAGON BALL GT

Toei Animation wasn't about to let their wildly successful saga end just because Akira Toriyama's manga had. Premiering the week after *DBZ* ended in March 1996, *Dragon Ball GT* continued the story of Goku, who has been magically transformed into a kid. He must search across the galaxy with Trunks and his granddaughter



DB GT'S GOKU

Pan in order to find the Dragon Balls that will restore him to adulthood. Naturally, they encounter new friends and enemies every step of the way, and it isn't long before the energy beams are flying.

Created entirely "in-house" by Toei (Toriyama only did some character designs), many fans consider *GT* to be non-canon, existing solely to milk every last drop from the *Dragon Ball* cash cow. But others feel that *GT* is a worthy continuation, blending the adventurous, lighthearted atmosphere of *Dragon Ball* with the spectacular, hyperkinetic battles of *DBZ*.

If you're hoping to see *GT* for yourself, have no fear: FUNimation and Cartoon Network fully intend to bring the show stateside in 2003—a deal is already in place. Till then, there's plenty more of *DBZ* and *DB* to keep you busy. ■ CP

were lost to the FCC early on.

ROBOT RALLY There's an entire episode in the first season where Gohan gets lost in a cave and befriends an old wrecked robot. This very poignant episode was actually a favorite of many Japanese viewers, but never aired in America.

MIS-LAUNCH Another episode showed Launch and Tien living together. It was cut, as were several other Launch scenes in early *DBZ*. She was cut out entirely, since American viewers hadn't seen the original *Dragon Ball* and wouldn't know who Launch was.

LIKE IT OR NOT

Whether anime purists like it or not, the bottom line is that some alteration is absolutely necessary in order to make *Dragon Ball* and *DBZ* suitable for American television.

It's always painful to see a beloved series get changed for stupid gaijin, but it has to be done. As *Dragon Ball Z* and anime in general gain in popularity, FUNimation has made their adaptation increasingly more faithful to the original work.

For those who want to see the *Dragon Ball* saga in its original, unmolested glory, there is an alternative. Uncut versions of *DBZ* on DVD have been released, and the first uncut *Dragon Ball* discs are just around the corner. They include both the English dub and the original Japanese version on separate audio tracks, and can be found in video shops everywhere.

To find out more about the *DBZ* changes, check out writer Chris Psaros' incredibly complete Website at <http://dbzcensored.dbzoa.net>.



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BATTLE 'TECH



AN EPIC TALE OF DEATH, LOVE AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH. BEHOLD THE ROBOTECH SAGA

Debuting in 1985 in U.S. syndication, *Robotech* was a breath of fresh air for cartoon fans fed up with He-Man and G.I. Joe. Full of action, death and complex relationships, Robotech quickly became a fan favorite.

As most older anime fans know, *Robotech* is actually a hybrid of U.S. and Japanese storytelling. Animation veteran Carl Macek spearheaded the project, which took three separate Japanese series and re-edited them into a cohesive storyline; the result was an 85-episode series which remains a cult classic to this day. Here's a handy guide to *Robotech*'s three story arcs, so you young 'uns can read up about what your elders got to watch before they invented *Gundam* and *Dragon Ball Z*...

THE MACROSS SAGA

In 1999, an armored alien spaceship crashes on Earth near Macross Island. Scientists and the military utilize its complex "Robotechnology," to create Veritechs—planes that transform into robots, for superior combat ability. Ten years later, the rechristened SDF-1 (Super Dimensional Fortress) is about to relaunch...

#1 - BOOBYTRAP **1st Appearance:** Rick Hunter, Roy Fokker, Capt. Henry Gloval, Lisa Hayes, Lynn Minmei, Lynn Jason, Breetai, Exedore. At SDF-1's launch, young pilot Rick Hunter meets his friend Roy Fokker, now a Veritech pilot. The Zentraedi arrive to steal the SDF. Rick sneaks into a Veritech fighter, and joins the ensuing battle.

#2 - COUNTDOWN Rick Hunter meets young Lynn Minmei on the deserted streets of Macross City, and tries to impress her with his flying. Captain Gloval prepares to take the untested SDF-1 into battle against the Zentraedi, and Rick discovers the Zentraedi are giants.

#3 - SPACE FOLD Trapped aboard SDF-1, Rick and Minmei try to leave the battle. But Captain Gloval attempts an emergency hyperspace jump, and the resulting space-fold pocket takes Macross Island with it! The SDF and Macross Island are now orbiting Pluto.

#4 - THE LONG WAIT Stranded in the vacuum of space with Minmei, Rick manages to make it back aboard SDF-1, but they get lost in the immense ship. Love blooms. Meanwhile, the 70,000 Macross survivors are brought aboard the SDF-1.

#5 - TRANSFORMATION The citizens of Macross City adapt to their new life aboard the SDF-1. Orbiting Earth, the Zentraedi discover troubling links between



UNFRIENDLY SPIES Rick Hunter inadvertently joins the fight against the Zentraedi in episode #1.

Earth and an ancient race of creatures known as "Micronians." The Zentraedi attack SDF-1, but it transforms into a large robot.

#6 - BLITZKRIEG The newly-configured SDF-1 repels the Zentraedi armada and hides in the rings of Saturn. Rick joins the Robotech Defense Force and becomes a Veritech fighter pilot, working under Commander Lisa Hayes.

#7 - BYE-BYE MARS **1:** Claudia Grant, Khyron. **Death:** Sara Base, Karl Riber. Breetai, the Zentraedi leader, calls in reinforcements led by the ruthless warlord Khyron. Near Mars, SDF-1 discovers that observation post Sara Base has been destroyed, and Lisa Hayes' fiancée was stationed there.

#8 - SWEET SIXTEEN **1:** Max Sterling, Ben Dixon. SDF-1 orbits Mars. Rick is given command of a squad, but can only think of Minmei's birthday party. Khyron's accelerated attacks almost win until Breetai forces him to pull back, lest he destroy the SDF.

#9 - MISS MACROSS **1:** Rico, Bron, Konda. Macross City holds a beauty pageant, and Minmei wins. Three spies are dispatched to do reconnaissance on the SDF-1, but Rick Hunter sends them packing. The Zentraedi are agghast that the humans mingle their sexes.

#10 - BLIND GAME Khyron disobeys Breetai and attacks SDF-1, knocking out much of its equipment. Lisa Hayes volunteers to fly a radar vessel into Zentraedi space. Rick's Vermilion Squad protects her. The United Earth Defense Headquarters forbids SDF-1 to return home.

#11 - FIRST CONTACT **1:** Dolza, Lisa, Rick, and Ben are captured by the Zentraedi and interrogated by Dolza, the supreme commander. Later, Dolza tells Breetai and Exedore that the Zentraedi were Micronians, but that their society evolved due to proto-



NICE CATCH Rick has Minmei well in hand in episode #2, starting their rocky relationship.

culture, and its secrets are in SDF-1.

#12 - THE BIG ESCAPE 1: Azonia. The Zentraedi trio of Rico, Bron and Konda are shrunk in size to infiltrate SDF-1. Lisa and Rick use kissing to distract the Zentraedi, and Max Sterling rescues them disguised as a guard. A disgraced Breetai is replaced by Azonia.

#13 - BLUE WIND Back on the SDF, Rick and crew report on Zentraedi and protoculture. Minmei has become a singing star. Khyron and Azonia fight about how to recapture SDF-1, and Captain Gloval takes the giant ship to Earth. The Zentraedi spies take in Micronian life.

#14 - GLOVAL'S REPORT Back on Earth, Captain Gloval prepares a report to his superiors, encapsulating the first 13 episodes.

#15 - HOMECOMING 1: Lynn Kyle. Gloval and Lisa ask the government for a truce with the Zentraedi, but they refuse, ordering the SDF to take off again. Rick takes Minmei to see her parents, where they pick up her cousin Lynn Kyle. The government has reported that Macross City was destroyed by guerrillas.

#16 - BATTLE CRY SDF-1's civilians don't want to return to space, and Lynn Kyle organizes them against the military. Khyron ignores Azonia's orders yet again and attacks the battlefortress, almost capturing it. Rick is critically injured, accidentally shot down by Lisa's command to fire.

#17 - PHANTASM Rick is in a coma and has feverish dreams about the last two years...and about his feelings for both Minmei and Lisa Hayes.

#18 - FAREWELL, BIG BROTHER 1: Miriya. **D:** Roy Fokker. Rick emerges from his coma and is visited by Lisa. Azonia's Zentraedi attack, including beautiful fighter pilot Miriya, who engages Max Sterling in battle within SDF-1. Roy Fokker dies of internal injuries sustained in battle.

#19 - BURSTING POINT **D:** Ben Dixon. Captain Gloval tries to relocate the civilians to Earth's Ontario quadrant. Miriya is shrunk to Micronian size to stalk Max. Khyron and Azonia launch opposing attacks on SDF-1, causing the SDF to malfunction, accidentally obliterating an Earth City and killing Ben.

#20 - PARADISE LOST The Earth government exiles SDF-1 and its inhabitants. After Azonia's failures, Breetai is put back in charge of one million ships! The Zentraedi spies return home to make reports. Minmei's words unite the SDF-1 military and civilians for the battles ahead.

#21 - A NEW DAWN Minmei and Kyle's anti-Zentraedi

martial arts movie premieres. Intercepting the transmission, Breetai and Exedore believe Kyle to be a super-weapon, and find the love scenes disturbing. Rick and Lisa leave the film, and find solace together.

#22 - BATTLE HYMN With the help of a stolen Minmei doll, Bron, Rico, and Konda defect to the humans' side, and take others with them. Khyron strikes on his own, assaulting Macross City while Lynn Minmei gives a concert.

#23 - RECKLESS Khyron's troops are deserting him to meet Minmei. The Zentraedi are found to be genetic matches for humans, and Captain Gloval grants the deserters political asylum. Exedore is afraid that the humans have deployed a secret weapon foretold by Zentraedi legends.

#24 - SHOWDOWN In light of the defectors, Lisa Hayes plans to secretly return to Earth to persuade her military father and other commanders to make peace with the Zentraedi. Max Sterling is enchanted by video arcade whiz Miriya, who plans to kill him. Kyle proposes to Minmei.

#25 - WEDDING BELLS Miriya tries to kill Max, but he defeats her and proposes. The human-Zentraedi wedding immediately takes place. Dolza orders the Zentraedi to attack, but Miriya helps the Veritech fighter pilots cripple their enemy without killing them. More Zentraedi desert.

#26 - THE MESSENGER A truce is called, and Breetai sends Exedore to SDF-1 to negotiate a peaceful settlement. Exedore now believes that Dolza may be their common enemy.

#27 - FORCE OF ARMS D: Dolza, his armada, many Earth cities. Dolza's entire Zentraedi invasion force attacks Earth. Minmei's singing has a disorienting effect on them. Many Earth cities are vaporized, until Gloval rams SDF-1 into Dolza's ship and obliterates them. The SDF crashes to Earth.

#28 - RECONSTRUCTION BLUES Two years later, Earth begins to rebuild. Rick and other Veritech pilots patrol the desolate land, protecting the human survivors. The wreck of SDF-1 has been transformed into a city. Rick and Lisa are close friends. Minmei and Kyle are not.

#29 - THE ROBOTECH MASTERS 1: The Robotech Masters. In a galaxy far, far away, the Robotech Masters learn that the SDF (the lost battlefortress of Zor, who developed protoculture and Robotechnology) is on Earth. The surviving Zentraedi warriors grow restless, and Khyron plots to attack Earth.

#30 - VIVA MIRIYA 1: Dana Sterling. The Robotech Masters try to resurrect Zor. Breetai and Exedore plot with several Earth warriors—including new intergalactic parents Max and Miriya Sterling—to capture the final remaining Robotech Factory to fool the Robotech Masters.

#31 - KHYRON'S REVENGE

Khyron attacks near New Detroit City, steal-



BABY MAKES TWO Max Sterling flies with baby Dana in episode #30.



ing the last protoclature chamber. He uses it to restore malcontent Zentraedi to their giant warrior size again, and gains back many deserters.

#32 - BROKEN HEART Khyron kidnaps Minmei and Kyle, hoping to trade for SDF-1. Rick and Lisa launch operation "Star Saver" and attack the renegade Zentraedi troops. Their rescue works, and Minmei realizes her feelings for Rick.

#33 - A RAINY NIGHT Lisa is despondent that her relationship with Rick may end now that Minmei has re-entered the picture. Claudia Grant does her best to console her friend, telling Lisa about her own stormy relationship with the late Roy Fokker.

#34 - PRIVATE TIME Rick and Lisa are preparing to go

on a picnic, but Rick goes away to meet Minmei instead. Later, when Rick returns to Lisa, the scent of Minmei's perfume on Rick's scarf sends the proud woman away.

#35 - SEASON'S GREETINGS Minmei tells Rick she wants to spend her life with him, and Lisa decides she can't compete with a star like Minmei. Khyron launches another devastating attack during Christmas, but his actions merely boost morale.

#36 - TO THE STARS 1: Grel. **D:** Almost everyone. Lisa Hayes commands the new SDF-2 and tells Rick her true feelings. Rick dumps Minmei. The SDFs attack Khyron's ship and collide, destroying pretty much everything. Rick and Lisa plan to start a life together and construct a new SDF-3 so future generations can see the stars.

ROBOTECH MASTERS

In the year 2029, 16-year-old Dana Sterling and Bowie Grant (Claudia Grant's nephew) are graduating from the United Earth Forces Military Academy. The world's societies are unstable and aggressive, but their differences are once again set aside when the Robotech Masters arrive at Earth. Dana and her squadron friends are quickly embroiled in the Second Robotech War.

#37 - DANA'S STORY 1: Bowie Grant, Dana and Bowie graduate, but Bowie doesn't want to remain in the military. Dana tells him the story of how her parents met to convince him there's hope. An emergency alert sounds: the Robotech Masters have arrived to reclaim

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BEHOLD, THE CREATOR

Meet Carl Macek, American mastermind behind *Robotech*

A former animation art gallery owner and self-professed "warrior/scholar" of pop culture, Carl Macek had been itching to see a Japanese anime show translated for American audiences which would remain true to its roots.

In 1984, Harmony Gold gave him that chance, asking him to help prepare *Macross* for American TV audiences. Needing more series to fill out a full TV season, he added two more anime shows owned by Harmony Gold. Macek created a storyline which tied the series together, revolving around "protoculture" and star-spanning "Robotechnology."

"Continuity was the primary challenge," says Macek. "The ability to look beyond the basic translation to find a universal story. It was kind of like using the footage as stock footage, and coming up with a story that fit." Macek shifted the years around, made some characters descendants of others, incorporated footage from one series into another and added in voice-overs, thereby creating a full 85-episode season, in less than five months!

Today, Macek is working with Harmony Gold on a proposed *Robotech 3000* series, and is proud of the original show. "I find the continuing popularity of the series fascinating. That it has held up so well makes me feel like it worked out well." ■ AM

the lost protoculture factory.

1138 - FALSE START 1: Captain Sean Phillips, Lieutenant Marie Crystal, Angelo Dante, Nova Satori, Colonel Alan Fredericks, Dana's squad—the Southern Cross Defense Corps—run drills. Dana runs afoul of Lt. Crystal and is thrown into the brig. Given another chance, Dana and her squadron defend Earth against the Robotech Masters' bioroids. Dana is troubled by her dreams.

1139 - SOUTHERN CROSS 1: Louie Nichols. Dana's squad is placed as rear guard defense. When the main base is decimated, Dana and her troops attack and send the bioroids back to their mother ship. Dana is promoted again, to the rank of first lieutenant.

1140 - VOLUNTEERS The Robotech Masters cut the link between the United Earth Command Headquarters and Space Station Liberty, an orbiting outpost. Dana and Marie volunteer for a high-risk mission to reestablish communications. There Dana confronts the red bioroid from her dreams.

1141 - HALF MOON 1: Zor Prime. Enemy Robotech Warriors, led by the red bioroid, are excavating at the crash site of the old SDF-1. Dana and Bowie stop them, though Bowie is captured. The 15th Squadron engages the bioroid forces, Bowie escapes, and Dana and the red bioroid recognize each other.

1142 - DANGER ZONE 1: Professor Miles Cochran, Dr. Samson Beckett, General Rolf Emerson. The bulk of Earth's troops attack the Robotech Masters, but a miscalculation kills most of them. Scientists discover the bioroid pilots are human, not shrunken Zentraedi. Dana tries a risky maneuver, and destroys the Robotech Fortress.

1143 - PRELUDE TO BATTLE The 15th squad prepares to go on another dangerous mission to explore the downed



SEEING RED Dana confronts the red Bioroid of her dreams in episode #40.

Robotech mothership. Bowie Grant is arrested twice, but he's freed in time to join the mission.

1144 - THE TRAP 1: Musica. Inside the alien ship, Dana's ATAC group discovers a bio-mechanical operation which creates androids. Bowie meets a beautiful alien woman named Musica. The Robotech Masters trap the 15th Squad, but Dana's soldiers escape.

1145 - METAL FIRE The Robotech Masters begin capturing humans to reprogram them to fight in bioroids, even as the parasitic Invid race heads towards Earth, also planning to take the protoculture matrix!

1146 - STAR DUST 1 & 2: George Sullivan. Bioroid fighters have captured over 200 civilians. Dana stops Leonard from killing a captured alien pilot, then meets an agent for the Global Military Police. The two plot a way to stop the Robotech Masters and rescue the abductees, but the arrival of a second mothership stops them.

1147 - OUTSIDERS 1: Major John Carpenter. The mysterious red bioroid pilot is captured. He is Zor Prime, the first clone of Zor, the creator of Robotechnology! But Zor has amnesia, and the Robotech Masters can see through his eyes. Bowie pines for Musica, and SDF-3 reports they will be unable to aid Earth!

1148 - DEJA VU The humans try to figure out if Zor is an Earth human who has been reprogrammed, or an alien. Zor has terrible nightmares, and Dana is drawn to him. Meanwhile, Sean Phillips visits the wounded Marie in the hospital, and romance blooms.

1149 - A NEW RECRUIT 1: Eddie. Zor is inducted into the Southern Cross army in the hopes that his memory will return and he'll have important tactical information. Other recruits don't accept Zor, but Dana does. The Robotech Masters watch the reawakening of Zor's memory with concern.

1150 - TRIUMPHURATE The Earth Defense Fleet launches a full assault on the Masters' armada, who are ready for them. Left behind, Dana and the 15th ATAC go to the wreck of SDF-1 to try to stimulate Zor's memory. He notices some strange flowers.

1151 - CLONE CHAMBER 1: Allegra, Octavia. Earth's attack fleet is defeated. The Masters learn that the "Invid Flowers of Life" are growing; the Invid draw nearer. The Masters' protoculture reserves are running out, and equipment begins to malfunction. Musica refuses to join with her prescribed mate, remembering Bowie.

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Illustration by Kenji Yamada. Art by Tetsuya Nomura. Music by Yoko Shimomura. Story by Tetsuya Nomura. Screenplay by Tetsuya Nomura. Character Design by Tetsuya Nomura. Animation by Tetsuya Nomura. Production by Tetsuya Nomura.



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#52 - LOVE SONG General Rolf Emerson launches another second attack, but many consider it a suicide run. Marie and Sean finally go out on a date, but it ends badly, and Sean departs for war.

#53 - THE HUNTERS Louie designs a "pupil pistol," a targeting device that uses organic visual impulses, and the military takes control of the weapon. General Emerson's troops engage the enemy, and the Robotech Masters unveil their own new weapon.

#54 - MIND GAME As the battle rages in space, the Earth Defense Fleet uses Louie's new Robotechnology to turn the tide. The 15th ATAC arrives and the humans come close to victory. Then the Robotech Masters make Zor Prime turn on his human friends.

#55 - DANA IN WONDERLAND The 15th Squad scatters into the Robotech mothership, fleeing from Zor's sentries. They learn that the androids are actually clones, and that human contact awakens their memories. Bowie helps Musica rebel against the Masters, but the 15th are

all captured!

#56 - CRISIS POINT The Robotech Masters have captured the humans, but now Zor Prime is missing and unstable. Musica finds Zor and helps him come to peace with his past. The two of them help the 15th Squad escape.

#57 - DAYDREAMER The 15th Squad returns to Earth. Musica tries Earth life, but the military police think she's a spy. Musica and Bowie hide in the SDF-1 ruins and learn that the Invid flowers are sapping the protocluture energy.

#58 - FINAL NIGHTMARE The Robotech Masters attack Earth to retrieve the protocluture before the Invid flowers contaminate it. Musica tells Bowie that the flowers are drawing the Invid towards Earth. Dana, Nova and Zor come to the SDF-1, where Zor regains not only his memories, but those of the original Zor, as well.

#59 - THE INVID CONNECTION The Robotech Masters order Leonard to evacuate the planet within 38 hours or they will destroy it. As the military counterattacks, Emerson's ship is destroyed and he and Marie are captured. The Masters arrange a trade: Zor and Musica for the General and his crew.

#60 - CATASTROPHE **D:** General Rolf Emerson, Octavia, the Robotech Masters, Zor. During the prisoner exchange, Emerson is killed. Dana follows Zor into the Robotech Masters' ship. Zor kills the Masters, puts Dana in an escape module and blows up the ship, hoping it will incinerate the Invid-contaminated protocluture. Unfortunately, the mutated protocluture/Invid spores spread out over Earth.

new generation

In 2033, the parasitic Invid have conquered Earth, led by a queen known as the Regis. Those humans left surviving are used in work camps, harvesting Invid flowers and processing protocluture. From space—where his Expeditionary Forces are searching for the Robotech Masters' homeworld—Admiral Rick Hunter has sent a group of fighters to Earth to free what's left of humanity from the Invid.

#61 - THE INVID INVASION **1:** Lieutenant Scott Bernard, Marlene Rush, Rand, the Invid Regis. **D:** Marlene Rush. Lieutenant Scott Bernard proposes to Marlene, but his whole Veritech squadron gets wiped out by the Invid when they arrive at Earth. Teaming up with an

PROTOCOLTURE ADDITIVES

The saga of the SDF continued at home and abroad

Although the Robotech series was completed with *New Generation*, several other Robotech or Macross-related projects have been released over the years. Here's a quick look at what's out there.

ROBOTECH II: THE SENTINELS

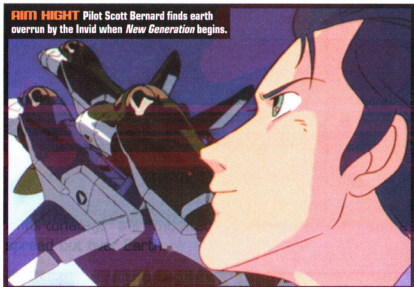
The only real spin-off series to go into production was this brainchild of Carl Macek. "Sentinels was a proposed 65-episode TV series which had the funding pulled a tenth of the way into the production," he says. Set between *Macross* and *Robotech Masters*, the all-American-animated and written film had heroes from the first series searching for the world of the Robotech Masters to stop further conflict.

MACROSS II: THE MOVIE

Set eighty years after the original Japanese Macross series, this feature is not part of *Robotech* continuity. Although the Zentraedi, the SDF, and other mecha designs appear, the film stands alone.

MACROSS PLUS

Although a few of the concepts and names are the same, the series is also not related to *Robotech*. "When *Macross* started having its revitalization in Japan," says Macek, "it was because of assumed interest in the US. As you see the storylines evolve in Japan, it seems to take from some of the *Robotech* mythology." ■ AM



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SDF ON DVD

A look at the added features of the Robotech DVDs



For almost two decades, fans have traded video copies of *Robotech*, scrambling to get episodes with the best picture possible from TV or lining their shelves with the professional video releases. But thanks to ADV Films, Robotech-heads can now get their mecha-fix with three disk boxed sets! While the *New Generation* sets haven't been announced yet, here's the great extras you're missing so far!

Robotech Legacy Collection 1: The Macross Saga, episodes 1-12

- "Elements of Robotechnology Vol. 1" (featurette, audio commentary, animation model sheets, foreign clips)

Robotech Legacy Collection 2: The Macross Saga, episodes 13-24

- "Elements of Robotechnology Vol. 2" (character bios, comic book covers, promotional films, toy commercials, foreign clips)

Robotech Legacy Collection 3: The Macross Saga, episodes 25-36

- "Elements of Robotechnology Vol. 3" (promotional videos, designs, and commentary, plus full-length *Robotech II: The Sentinels* production, foreign clips)

Robotech Legacy Collection 4: The Robotech Masters, episodes 37-48

- "Elements of Robotechnology Vol. 4" (original Japanese openings/closings, comic book covers, production sketches, foreign clips)

Robotech Legacy Collection 5: The Robotech Masters, episodes 49-60 (to be released 12/11/01)

- "Elements of Robotechnology Vol. 5" (never-aired English pilot episode, music video, trailer, production art, designs, storyboards, foreign clips) ■ AM



GENDER BENDER Lancer often disguised himself as a woman, intriguing many young Robotech viewers.

Earth youth named Rand, Scott sets out to find an area known as Reflex Point and kill the Invid Regis.

#62 - THE LOST CITY 1: Annie LaBelle. Scott and Rand come to a town cooperating with the Invid in peace. The duo befriends tough orphan Annie, but the townspeople betray them to the Invid. A mysterious female Cyclone rider rescues them from Invid Shock Troopers, then disappears.

#63 - LONELY SOLDIER BOY 1: Lunk, Rook Bartley, Yellow Dancer/Lancer. Scott and crew meet a singer named Yellow Dancer, a woman named Rook, and a grizzled soldier named Lunk. After a brief encounter with the mysterious Cyclone rider, they defeat an anarchistic gang, and find out that Yellow Dancer is a revolutionary...and a transvestite.

#64 - SURVIVAL Scott's group of rebels now stands at five, and Lunk has a working Veritech Alpha fighter. The Invid can track them when they use their technology, so they escape through the forests. They need more protoclature energy to fly the ship.

#65 - CURTAIN CALL While the Yellow Dancer performs a concert, the other four freedom fighters use the diversion to raid an Invid protoclature storage unit. After difficulties with the law and the Invid, the group gets away.

#66 - HARD TIMES 1: Romy, Lily Bartley. The freedom fighters approach Rook's hometown, and she becomes sullen, remembering her motorcycle gang. She challenges a rival biker gang leader, and her victory gains both freedom for the townspeople and inner peace.

#67 - PAPER HERO After an Invid skirmish, Lunk must deliver a book belonging to a fellow soldier, now dead. At the soldier's town, they find that the townspeople have killed his pacifist father.

#68 - EULOGY 1 & D: Colonel Jonathan Wolff. The quintet come to a town where Colonel Wolff trades soldiers and weaponry to the Invid in exchange for peace and protoclature. At Reflex Point, the Regis worries that the human resistance fighters could destroy the Genesis Pits.

#69 - THE GENESIS PITS The Genesis Pits are used by the Invid Regis for biogenetic engineering experiments. Scott, Rand and Annie stumble into one of the pits, finding dinosaurs, Invid and monsters. The Regis possesses

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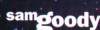
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ALPHA BITS The Alpha Fighter ruled *New Generation* like the Veritech did in *Macross*.

Annie for a brief time, telling Scott that humanity's evolutionary path is about to end.

#70 - ENTER MARLENE 1: Invid simulagent/Marlene/Ariel. The Regis creates Ariel, a biogenetic woman with a psychic link to the Invid mother. A battle against the Invid goes well, thanks to Lancer's new Beta fighter plane. The group adopts the amnesiac Ariel, not knowing she's the Regis' simulagent, and name her Marlene.

#71 - THE SECRET ROUTE 1: Carla, Donald Maxwell. Unable to get across a difficult mountain range with all their equipment, the group rests in a village. The mayor sells them a bogus map to freedom, but after they face the Invid, he gives them the true map.

#72 - THE FORTRESS The Invid mountain fortress lies between Scott's group and Reflex Point, and they decide to raid it. Rand and Annie get inside, discovering the Regis is creating scout troopers. The pair are captured, but the others rescue them and destroy the fortress.

#73 - SANDSTORMS The group hides in a desert cave to evade Invid shock troopers. Rand into a pit containing the hallucinogenic spores of the Invid Flower of Life. His dreams tell him that the Invid are plugging themselves into Earth's evolutionary chain.

#74 - ANNIE'S WEDDING 1: MacGruder. The freedom fighters discover a group of primitive outcasts who worship the Invid. Scott teaches them the truth, and the rebels build rafts to negotiate the river. Annie stays behind to marry their prince, while the Regis unveils a prototype mecha.

#75 - SEPARATE WAYS The Invid cause a cave-in, trapping the rebels inside. The time in the darkness—and Annie's loss—eats away at the group. They escape their tomb, using the last of their protoculture, and Annie rejoins the group.

#76 - METAMORPHOSIS 1: Sera, Corg. The Regis creates a prince and princess—human in form, but with Invid instincts. The Regis sends them to find out why Ariel/Marlene is malfunctioning. Sera has contact with Lancer that brings up emotions, and becomes tainted by humanity.

#77 - THE MIDNIGHT SUN Having just crossed from South to North America, Ariel/Marlene memories begin to return. The Invid attack, and Sera confronts Lancer and Ariel/Marlene. Sera spares them and the fighters make their escape.

#78 - GHOST TOWN The rebels find a town occupied by Robotech War veterans. Scott hears that Admiral Hunter's Expeditionary Force is planning an offensive on the Invid. The old soldiers rally and attack nearby Invid scout towers.

#79 - PROSTITUTE In the mountains, Scott's group finds the deserted city of Denver buried beneath the ice. Scott feels close to Ariel/Marlene, but suspects her. The Corg attacks, and the group must destroy the city to save themselves.

#80 - BIRTHDAY BLUES Cruising in their mecha, the rebels encounter an Invid hive. The humans retreat to an abandoned town to celebrate Annie's birthday. Invid troopers attack, but Lunk's fireworks scare them away.

#81 - HIRED GUN 1 & D: Dusty Ayres. The rebels join a town posse to catch a soldier who has killed his squadmembers. Rook befriends the "killer," who was only taking revenge on those who let him be tortured and modified by the Invid. The man dies protecting Rook's friends from the Invid.

#82 - THE BIG APPLE 1: Simon. New York City is relatively intact after the Invid attacks. Stopping to get protocol, the rebels are almost caught. The Regis orders the destruction of New York, but Sera argues against it. Sera tells Ariel/Marlene that she's an Invid.

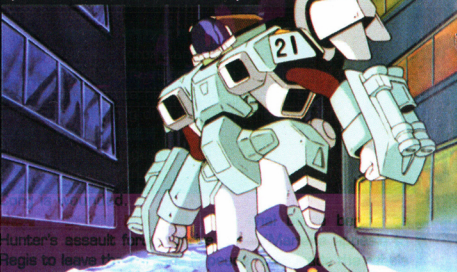
#83 - REFLEX POINT 1 & D: Sue Graham. The rebels arrive at Reflex Point, where the Expeditionary Forces have already been decimated by the Invid. A journalist tells them that Rick Hunter's main Robotech force will arrive soon. When the Invid return, Prince Corg is wounded.

#84 - DARK FINALE The final battle begins as Hunter's assault forces arrive. Ariel/Marlene appeals to Regis to leave the humans in peace, then leads the rebels in an attack on the hive. Sera begins to side with them, and Scott and Corg duel in their combat armor.

#85 - SYMPHONY OF LIGHT D: Corg. The Jupiter Division fleet engages the Invid using their new invisible Shadow Fighters and wins. The Regis takes all the protoculture and leaves Earth, but not before Scott kills Corg. Yellow Dancer gives a final concert. As the others build a new life, Scott returns to space to find the missing Admiral Rick Hunter.

Oregon-based writer Andy Mangels wishes he was addicted to protoculture, and not those tasty Hostess Fruit Pies.

UNIT CYCLE Freedom fighter Rand shows off his Cyclone, which transformed from robot suit to motorcycle.



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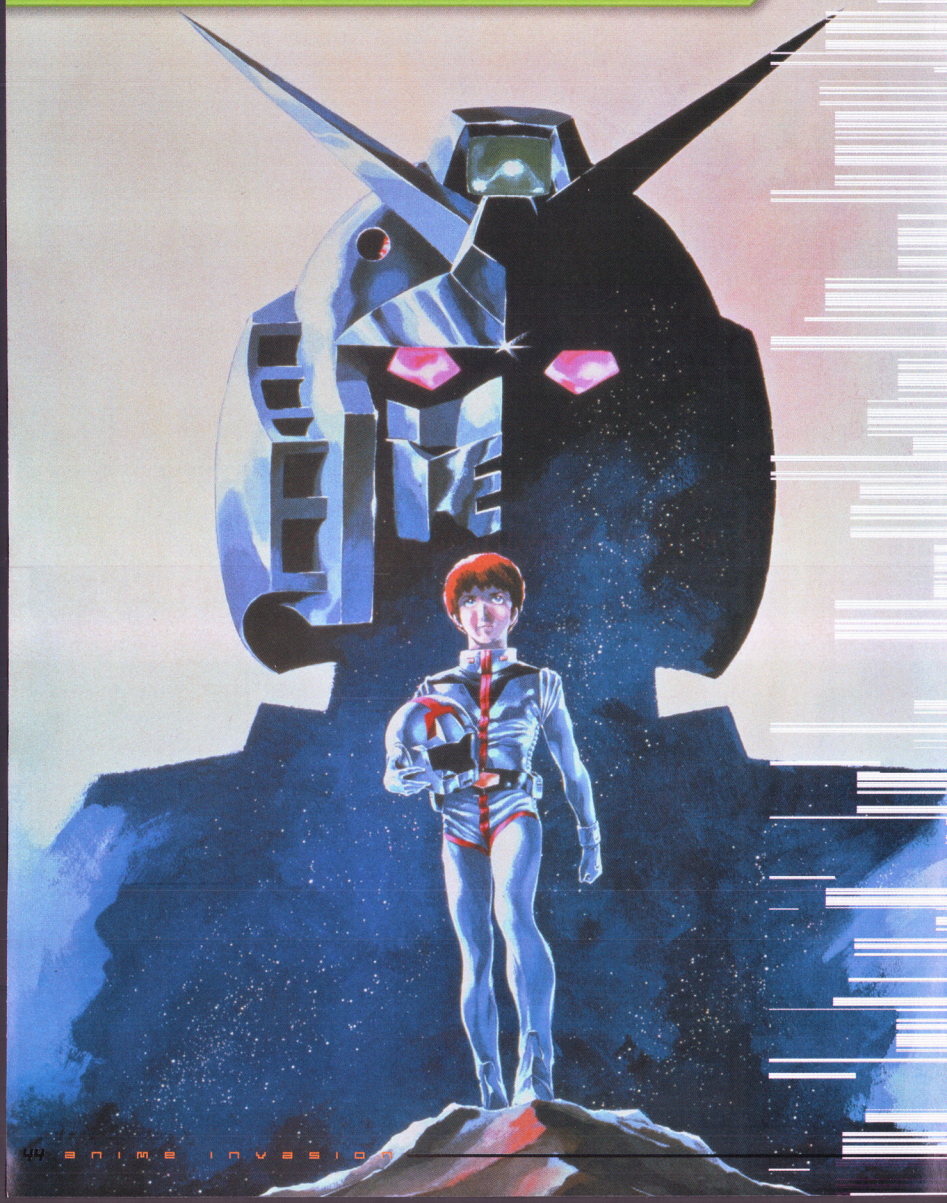


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GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUN



GUNDAM

A-GO-GO

by Matthew Alt

ALL these Gundam series got you confused? *Anime Invasion* presents everything—and we mean everything—you need to know about Universal Centuries to come.

Gundam it! The Japanese have hoarded it long enough! Finally, the States are getting all the Gundam we want.

One of the most complex science fiction universes ever created, it's no exaggeration to call it the "Star Wars of Japan"—in fact, it's an understatement. Star Wars fans have a measly four feature films to obsess over—there's a *universe* of Gundam stuff out there, including some fifteen separate television series, films, and mini-series! That's a whole lotta giant-robot action for any fan to follow, but it's even harder for Americans—only a handful of the shows from Gundam's epic storyline have been released Stateside. So ANIME INVASION provides this handy guide to all the Gundam on tape, DVD, TV or not on anything...yet. Hang onto your Zakus as we tell you all about all the Gundams ever made.

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM

THE SHOW: This is it—the great granddaddy of the entire Gundam world. This 43-episode series was an effort to take the giant robot genre in Japan and make it into a realistic—yet futuristic—military drama. It all starts here.

THE PLOT: In the far future, Earth's population has reached nine billion. Desperate to relieve the overcrowding in Earth's huge cities, the Earth Federation initiates an ambitious plan to relocate much of humanity to outer space. Describing the first year of the exodus as Universal Century (UC) 0001, a series of enormous space colonies are placed into orbit around the Earth. These huge colonies, called "Sides," provide artificial gravity and ample space for people to start anew. Unfortunately, it's only a matter of time before human nature rears its

ugly head. Within sixty years, the government of Side 3 declares independence from the Earth Federation. By the year UC 0079, The Republic of Zeon (as they now call themselves) declares all-out war on the Earth, holding the advantage with their hugely powerful Mobile Suits (MS), ambulatory tanks that allow humans to fight in nearly any environment. After six months of deadlock, Earth devises their own MS prototype, known as "Gundam," which will be the most powerful MS of all and turn the tide of war for the Earth Federation.

THE PLAYERS: Amuro Ray was just an average teenage guy growing up on Side 7 when the Zeon attacked his home.

Fortunately, he happened to be standing near the prototype MS Gundam. Sneaking in and piloting Gundam like a seasoned pro, Amuro saves the day and gets the job of being Gundam's full-time pilot in the process. Amuro fights on the side of the Earth Federation, developing his supernatural robot-piloting abilities along the way.

Char Aznable, otherwise known as the "Red Comet," is the Zeon



BIG DADDY The RX-78 Gundam and its pilot Amuro Ray (opposite page) started it all in 1972.

Army's ace MS pilot. Although he's an even match for Amuro in combat, there's something curious at work. The psychic connection shared by Amuro and Char seems to be signaling a new phase in human evolution, and the presence of their "Newtype" abilities forms another central feature of the Gundam world.

THE 08TH MS TEAM

THE SHOW: The 08th MS Team is a 12-episode miniseries taking place in the same timeframe as the original Gundam show, but set mostly on planet Earth.

THE STORY: The Zeon's military campaign is going swimmingly, but the Earth Federation isn't ready to give up yet, and starts organizing entire battalions of MS-equipped commandos to retake Zeon-controlled territory on Earth. This series focuses on the exploits of the common fighting men and women of the Earth Federation, showcasing serious in-the-trenches MS action.

Although some of the story takes place in space, most is set in the jungles of Southeast Asia. This emphasis on down-and-dirty land combat is what sets the *08th MS Team* apart.

THE PLAYERS: Shiro Amada is the brash officer assigned command of the 08th MS Team. He's a model soldier until a fateful encounter with the beautiful female Zeon ace pilot Aina Sakhalin. As he falls in love with the enemy, he is forced to decide between his country and his heart, while higher-ups suspect him of "consorting with the enemy." A favorite among Gundam fans.

0080: WAR IN THE POCKET

THE SHOW: A six-part miniseries set in UC 0079 - 0080, at the very end of the One Year War.



0083: STARDUST MEMORY



THE STORY: In late UC 0079, the Zeon Army has their sights set on stealing an ultra-secret prototype Gundam from a military base on Side 6.



0080: WAR IN THE POCKET

THREE WAY BRAWLS Upper left: Shiro Amada and the 08th MS Team; Lower left: Kou Araki battles Zeon in 0083; Above: Al Izhara and Gundam strikes a pose in 0080.

things before they go too far.

THE PLAYERS: Elementary schooler Al Izhara is a Mobile Suit maniac. (Hey, who isn't?) His stumbling upon Bernard Wiseman, a member of the Cyclops Team's undercover operation, is like a dream come true. Complicating things, Bernie has a crush on Al's next-door neighbor—a young lady by the name of Christina Mackenzie, who just happens to be the test-pilot for the Federation's secret Gundam prototype.

0083: STARDUST MEMORY

THE SHOW: Set in the nether-region between the events of the first Gundam series and the sequel television series *Zeta Gundam*, 0083 is a 13-episode miniseries.

THE STORY: Three years after the end of the One-Year War, an ex-Zeon officer steals a prototype nuclear-powered Gundam from a Federation test base. Declaring the revival of Zeon, he blasts his way off into the night, and the race is on to recover the stolen Mobile Suit. First in Eastern Africa, then in Earth orbit and the moon's surface, and finally on a space colony, the crew of the Federation space-carrier *Albion* does their best to stop the group of renegade Zeons who masterminded the robot-hijacking. Unfortunately, stealing the Unit 2 was only the cover for their real motive: a plot to lay waste to the Earth's surface.

THE PLAYERS: Earth Federation Lieutenant Kou Araki is sta-

UNIVERSAL CENTURY (UC) TIMELINE

When space colonization began, the Earth Federation started a new calendar to celebrate this new phase in civilization. Little did they know what else was going to happen...

UC 0001: Earth kicks off an ambitious space colonization plan.

UC 0027: First permanent lunar settlement, Von Braun City, founded.

UC 0040: Forty percent of human population lives in space.

UC 0050: Emigration to colonies halted; population in space ("Spacenoids") reaches 9,000,000,000.

UC 0050: Space colony Side 3 declares independence from the Earth Federation, renaming itself the Republic of Zeon.

UC 0065: Discovery of Minovsky particle revolutionizes physics.



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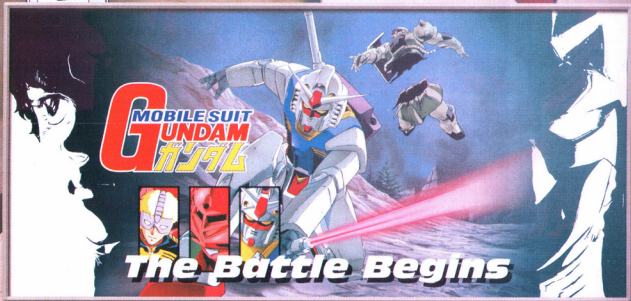
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tioned at a test-base full of Gundam prototypes. When the sinister Anavel Gato makes his move on one of them, the outmatched Kou tries to stop him, setting off the space-chase of OOB3.

ZETA GUNDAM

THE SHOW: Set in OOB7, seven years after the One Year War, the 50-episode *Zeta Gundam* was the first televised sequel to the *Mobile Suit Gundam* series in Japan.

THE STORY: In the wake of the events in *Gundam OOB3*, the Earth Federation has set up an elite force called "Titans" to hunt down renegade factions of ex-Zeon members. Unfortunately, the overzealous Titans quickly turn into a group of murderous thugs. The Earth Federation tries to hush things up, but it isn't long before an Anti-Earth Union Group (AEUG), comprised of both ex-Federation and ex-Zeon members who disagree with the Federation's policies, springs up. They're able to set up a small MS-equipped strike force of their own on a space-carrier called *Agama*. Fortunately, they've also got the super-slick transforming Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam to help them out.

THE PLAYERS: The *Agama* is commanded by Bright Noah, captain of the White Base in the original Gundam series. On board are Quattro Bagina, who turns out to be none other than Char Aznable in a thin disguise, and Camille Vidan, a pacifistic civilian with incredible MS-piloting abilities.

GUNDAM DOUBLE ZETA ("ZZ")

THE SHOW: The lighthearted *Gundam Double Zeta* is a 47-episode television series set in the year UC OOB8, the year after the events of *Zeta Gundam*.

THE STORY: The Titans are gone, but humanity's problems are far from over. It seems yet another renegade faction of the Zeon army has set up camp in a giant, hollowed-out asteroid fortress called "Axis." Calling themselves the "Neo-Zeon," they begin an aggressive campaign to recruit the space colonies to their cause: all-out war against the Earth and the Earth Federation. Fortunately, however, the battle-weary AEUG crew of the *Agama* has just taken delivery of the newest Gundam Mobile Suit: the fully-transforming ZZ Gundam.

THE PLAYERS: Fourteen-year-old Judo Ashta was a street-wise kid from the slums until the crew of the *Agama* took him under their wing. Good move: his MS-piloting abilities turn out to be almost on par with that of the legendary Amuro Ray.

CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK

THE SHOW: The first Gundam film officially made for movie theatres, *Char's Counterattack* is a feature-length film that debuted in 1988. It is set in OOB3, five years after *Gundam Double Zeta* and fourteen years after the very first Gundam television series.

THE STORY: The AEUG has disbanded and the characters have gone their separate ways. By UC OOB3, Char has returned to his roots, assuming leadership of the Neo-Zeon group. He's devised a plan to end the meddling of the Earth

ALTERED STATES

Some of Gundam's series are Out of this Universe!

Sometimes, one universe is not enough. To sate Gundam fans without interfering with their beloved Gundam canon, alternate-universe series were created to help breathe new life into the fan favorite.



MOBILE FIGHTER G-GUNDAM

THE SHOW: An exceptionally silly TV series set in the year Future Century (FC) 60, Think Street Fighter meets Gundam, with extra goofy added in.

THE STORY: Humanity's ruling elite has retreated to the space colonies and left Earth to the wretched masses. Every few years, the colonies hold a tournament to determine who'll run the universe for the next term. Rather than a tedious electoral process, each colony builds a titanic and ethnically questionable Gundam Fighter to represent their nation in the ring. (Neo France's Gundam Rose looks disturbingly like Napoleon Bonaparte; Neo Sweden's machine is a sveita schoolgirl, called Nobel Gundam; Neo Mexico gets the sombrero-wearing Tequila Gundam. The silly list goes on...)



GUNDAM WING

THE SHOW: Although hugely popular in the US, *Gundam Wing* was loathed by Japanese fans of the original because of its *bishonen* or "pretty boy" characters...

THE STORY: It's After Colony (AC) 195. In order to free the space colonies from the tyranny of the United Earth Sphere Alliance, five teen warriors are sent down to Earth to start breaking things. Gundam Wing becomes a roller-coaster ride of political intrigue, giant-robot combat and angst, with heavy philosophical themes of loyalty, the responsibility of power and the morality of war. And great robot-on-robot fighting, too.



GUNDAM WING: ENDLESS WALTZ

THE SHOW: A three-part miniseries designed to resolve some of the hanging plot threads of the original *Gundam Wing* series.

THE STORY: Set a year after the events of *Gundam Wing*, the people of Earth and the population of the space colonies have finally put aside their differences. Strange things are afoot at colony X-18993, however: A new rebellion, led by a young girl, is brewing, and the Gundam Wing pilots are forced into their Mobile Suits once again.



GUNDAM X

THE SHOW: A post-apocalyptic Gundam TV series set 15 years after the "Seventh Space War." It's a sort of back-to-basics Alternate Universe outing.

THE STORY: Decades of war have ravaged both the governments of the space colonies and that of Earth to the point where both have completely collapsed. In the chaos, scavenger groups called "Vultures" reign supreme. Using this anarchic setting as a backdrop, a former soldier uses his Gundam X Mobile Suit to find and protect his Newtype brethren.



TURN-A GUNDAM

THE SHOW: Featuring designs by American designer Syd Mead and set in the far, far future, *Turn-A Gundam* is a sort of "steampunk" take on the Gundam concept.

THE STORY: It's CC 2345, thousand of years after the setting of any previous Gundam series. In fact, it's so far in the future, Earth has forgotten it ever went into space, let alone had Mobile Suits. A lost colony of humans living on the Moon want to go back home, but folks living on Earth don't want them to. But the Moonbase have big robots. It's not going to be pretty. ■ MA

Federation once and for all, by plunging a huge asteroid into the surface of the Earth. Amuro Ray returns to the scene to put an end to Char's plot in a customized Mobile Suit Gun-

UC 0078: Zeon engineers use Minovsky physics to design giant robots for use as weapons.

UC 0073: Zeon perfects the world's first true Mobile Suit.

UC 0075: First "Zaku" type Mobile Suits roll off the production line.

UC 0079: One Year War: Half of human race killed in the first month of combat.

UC 0083: "Delaz Fleet" of ex-Zeon members plans massive attack against the Earth Federation.

UC 0085: Anti-Earth Union Group (AEUG) formed; Char Aznable, Bright Noah and others join.

UC 0087: The AEUG, armed with the prototype Zeta Gundam, defeats the Titans.

UC 0088: Char Aznable founds the "Neo-Zeon."

The background of the poster features a large, stylized illustration of a baseball player in a white uniform with blue pinstripes, swinging a bat. In the foreground, a young boy with brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and red pants, is sitting on the ground, looking up towards the player. To the left, a large stadium light tower is illuminated with a bright yellow and orange glow. The overall color palette is dominated by blue, white, and red, with a warm orange glow from the stadium lights.

princess NINE

9 girls... dreams...

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that will change them
forever.

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FILMS

THE SHOW: Another theatrical film, featuring a reunion of the original creative team responsible for the first *Mobile*

are been replaced by an all-new organization called the Congress of Settlement Nations (CONSENT). Although they

GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM GUNDAM



LAST RITES The latest Gundam in the saga, *G-Saviour* was the first to be animated by computer.

dam that can be controlled using his psychic abilities.

THE PLAYERS: Both Char and Amuro are back, and there's no love lost between the two. Further complicating the situation are Hathaway Noah, son of Bright Noah, and Quess Paraya, a thirteen-year-old Newtype with a serious crush on Char.

GUNDAM F-91

THE SHOW: Another theatrical film, featuring a reunion of the original creative team responsible for the first *Mobile Suit Gundam* series, and set 30 years after *Char's Counterattack*.

THE STORY: In UC 0123, the wealthy and powerful Ronah family embarks on a plan to establish a utopian society based on their survival-of-the-fittest ideals. Using the Crossbone Vanguard, their private army of MS-equipped soldiers, they invade a space colony called Frontier IV and wipe out the Federation garrison stationed there. Not pleased with this turn of events, a ragtag band of resistance fighters from Frontier IV commandeer an Earth Federation training ship called *Space Ark*. Although outnumbered and outgunned by the more experienced Crossbone Vanguard, the resistance has a trick up their sleeve: the semi-complete prototype Mobile Suit Gundam F-91.

THE PLAYERS: Seventeen-year-old Seabook Arno is just an engineering student when the Crossbone Vanguard attacks his colony, but his mechanical aptitude makes him the perfect choice for the pilot of the resistance fighters' Gundam F-91. He's going to need every bit of talent he possesses to defeat the sociopathic Karozo Ronah and his legions of Mobile Suits.

VICTORY GUNDAM

THE SHOW: Set in UC 0153, *Victory Gundam* is a 51-episode television series that takes place almost 75 years after the events of the original *Mobile Suit Gundam* series.

THE STORY: The Earth Federation has finally moved its base of operations from Earth to the Moon. Earth has

become a virtual nature preserve, with a handful of humans living in specially designated areas. But the space colonies' desire for independence from the increasingly irrelevant Federation has never been stronger. The radical political movement known as Zanscar plans to re-colonize the Earth with "true believers" from Side 2. It's up to the resistance organization known as League Militaire to use their state-of-the-art Mobile Suits, known as the Victory Gundam series, to kick ass and take names.

THE PLAYERS: Thirteen-year-old Usso Ebbing not only holds the title of youngest Gundam series protagonist, he's also a frighteningly apt MS pilot in his own right, having spent much of his childhood playing around on an MS simulator.

G-SAVIOUR

THE SHOW: Released on Japanese television in 2000, *G-Saviour* is the world's first live-action addition to the world of *Mobile Suit Gundam*. Featuring real actors and CGI Mobile Suits, the film is set in the far-flung year of UC 0233, 70 years after *Victory Gundam*.

THE STORY: The Earth Federation has [finally!] collapsed and been replaced by an all-new organization called the Congress of Settlement Nations (CONSENT). Although they control all of Earth and most of the space colonies, a tiny force of freedom fighters known as the "Illuminati" have begun standing up to CONSENT's tyranny. Centering largely around the discovery of a new and totally renewable source of energy that will create peace and productivity for all of humanity, the story of *G-Saviour* spans not only a film but a radio serial and PlayStation 2 video game as well.

THE PLAYERS: Mark Camran, a former CONSENT MS pilot, is working on Earth when he's drawn into the conflict between the Illuminati and his former bosses. When it comes down to the wire, he chooses the side of right and teams up with the separatists to cast off CONSENT's yoke.

Freelance writer Matthew Alt was a whiny youth until he accidentally became the pilot of the legendary Paternity Suit Gundam, and became a man. Special thanks to www.gundamproject.com for invaluable resources.

INCOMING! WHERE TO FIND THESE GUNDAMS

ON CARTOON NETWORK: *Mobile Suit Gundam*, *08th MS Team*, *Gundam Wing* and *Endless Waltz* can be seen during various time slots on Toonami, from 5-7 p.m. and 12-1 a.m. weekdays. *0080: War in the Pocket* premieres on Toonami in November.

VHS/DVD: For home viewing, Bandai has put out tapes and DVDs of *Mobile Suit Gundam*, *0080: War in the Pocket*, *0083: Stardust Memory*, *08th MS Team*, *Gundam Wing* and *Endless Waltz*.

JAPAN ONLY: *Zeta Gundam*, *Gundam Double Zeta*, *Gundam F91*, *Victory Gundam*, *G Gundam Gundam X* and *Turn A Gundam*.

COMING SOON: *Char's Counterattack* and *G-Saviour* will both make it to DVD sometime in 2002.

UC 0083: Char

Aznable leads Neo-Zeon in a massive campaign against the Earth Federation.

UC 0105: Bright

Noah's son Hathaway becomes an anti-Federation terrorist.

UC 0123: The

private army known as the Crossbone Vanguard is formed.

UC 0149 :

Establishment of Zanscar Empire on Side 2.

UC 0153:

Zanscar Empire launches full-scale invasion of what remains of Earth.

UC 0203: A clone

of Char Aznable leads a resistance group called "Metatron."

UC 0210: The Earth

Federation finally collapses and is replaced by Congress of Settlement Nations (CONSENT).

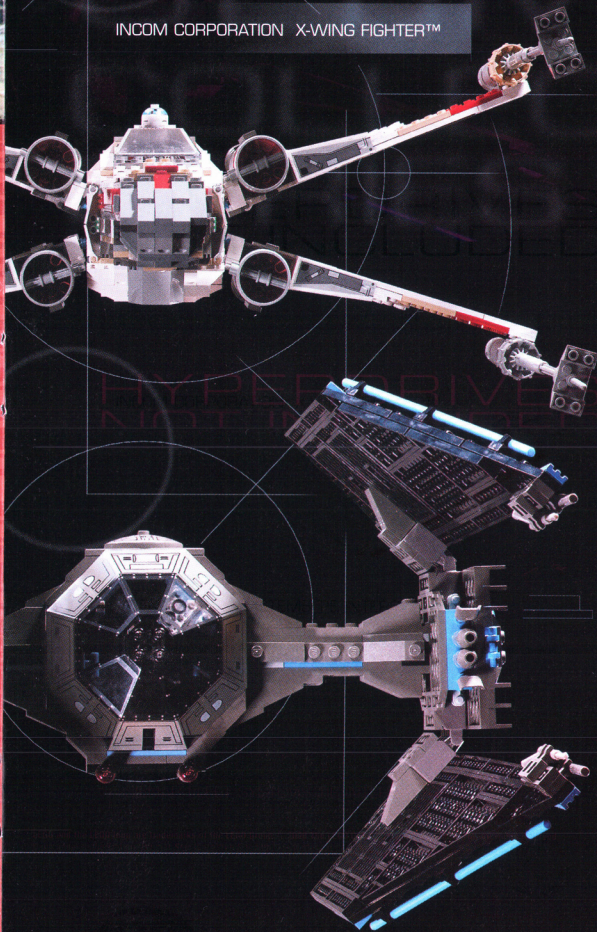
UC 0233:

Formation of resistance group "Illuminati." ■ MA

HYPERDRIVES NOT INCLUDED.



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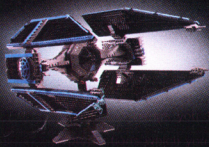
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ANIME-ZING GRACE

THE ULTIMATE ANIME HOLIDAY BUYER'S GUIDE

By Andrew Kardon

Nothing, and we mean *nothing*, is worse than getting socks as a gift. Well, boring undergarments are a thing of the past, thanks to our spiffy Holiday Buying Guide, which is sure to make any anime fan's eyes wider than Sailor Moon's. We've picked the coolest, neatest, man-are-your-friends-gonna-be-jealous items, on sale just in time for the holiday season.

GO HOG WILD

Kaneda/Motorcycle Boxed Set, \$20

TETSU0000! This deluxe boxed set from McFarlane Toys is just what every toy fan needs to wage post-apocalyptic war on their toy collection! Straight out of the classic *Akira* manga/anime comes biker gang leader Kaneda and his sweet set o' wheels. At roughly 6 inches tall, Kaneda contains some 10 points of articulation, which means you can put him in just about any pose on or off his 9 1/2-inch-long cycle. Get yer mind outta the gutter.

www.spawn.com



BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN

Dragon Ball Z 5-inch light & sound figures, \$14.95 each

Bam! Zap! Zammie! Uh...if you're like us, you've probably just about run out of sound effects to recreate your favorite Dragon Ball Z battles. But thanks to this new set of figures from Irwin Toy, you don't have to. These toontastic Dragon Ball Z figures feature all sorts of wicked light and sound effects, which are sure to drive your cat crazy. In case you need a few more blonde action figures, this series includes: Super-Saiyan Goku, Super-Saiyan Gohan, Super-Saiyan Vegeta and Super-Saiyan Trunks. www.irwintoy.com

LITTLE BIG BOT

Robotech Super-Deformed Alpha Fighter and Veritech Morphers, \$9.99 each

Y'know, it just ain't the holidays without super-deformed transforming robots, right? Just ask Santa! These two Robotech lines from Toykami spotlight the kick-ass Alpha Fighters and Super-Veritechs. The Alphas (available in a variety of colors) transform from Jet to Gerwalk to Robot. And the Veritechs are not only motorized transformable little buggers, but they also feature detachable booster armor to re-enact all your favorite robot-battlin' scenes. www.toykami.com



ALPHA FIGHTER



VERITECH MORPHERS

SILENT BUT DEADLY

Silent Mobius Katsumi Liqueur Pewter Statue, \$39.99



MS. LIQUEUR

Sorry, kids. This is one non-alcoholic statue, so don't be fooled by its name. Ms.

Liqueur is actually the main character from Kia Asamiya's mega-popular *Silent Mobius* anime/manga series.

Made of some of the highest grade white metal pewter, each Katsumi is individually hand-casted and hand-painted, so there's extra-special love in every one. Limited to just 2,000, Ms. Liqueur comes packaged in a spiffy collector's box.

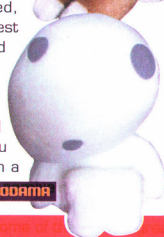
PLUSH PRINCESS

Princess Mononoke Kodama and Yakkuru plushes; \$32.99, \$26.99

Thanks to these Nibanki imports from Japan, you'll never have another restless night. These stuffed, wacky little head-bobbing forest spirits called the Kodama stand 11 inches tall and feature a bell inside their heads. Then there's the elk-like Yakkuru who measures some 7-inch long and includes a set of reigns so you can ride into fierce battle with a Tatari Gami.



YAKKURU



KODAMA

THE BIG GIFT

PUT THIS UNDER THE TREE FOR SMILES FROM EAR TO EAR!

OUT OF HER SHELL

Masamune Shirow's Man/Machine Interface Action Figure, \$14.99 each

Masamune Shirow's sequel to his mega-hit *Ghost in the Shell* is finally hitting the States, and you can join in on the fun with these three figures from Toycom. Take your pick from three different versions of anime babe Motoko Aramaki: Fire Wall Motoko (in black cyber-suit with removable mask), White Dress Motoko (with PDA & VR Visor) and a third unnamed (yet uber-sexy) version dressed in white with thigh-high boots. Each figure also comes with one of five different mini-drone assistant figures.



WHITE DRESS MOTOKO



MOTOKO



FIRE WALL MOTOKO



MINI-DRONES

PIC A BUST

Dragon Ball Z Piccolo bust; \$45

Ah, Jenny Piccolo, the sweet, sweet girl who was always vying for the Fonz's attention.

Remember the time she and Richie were talking and Patsy came over to...oh, wait.

Sorry. Wrong Piccolo. This one's a little cooler (and greener). Well, this 6-inch bust from Palisades spotlights the energetic Namekian from *Dragon Ball Z*. Sporting his traditional white cape and bad-ass stare, ol' Piccolo is limited to just 2,500 pieces and comes individually numbered. www.palisadestoy.com



PICCOLO

YOU CAN KEEP 'EM

WORSE THAN SWEATERS, KEEP THE RECEIPTS FOR THESE JAPANESE GIFTS

We always go nuts whenever supercool products from Asia hit our shores. But there are some items from overseas that will never go over well Stateside. Here are just a few:



HOLY CRAP!

Doraemon toilet paper, 330¥

Hey, kids! Now you can wipe your ass with Doraemon! Not only does this toilet paper encourage kids not to crap in their pants, it also encourages them to crap as often as possible so they can share

adventures with the cat-type robot and his friends. Lemon-scented.

TASTE LIKE CHICKEN

Takoyaki flavor potato chips, 150¥



Takoyaki is actually octopus diced, battered, cooked and served in balls covered with mayonnaise, fish flakes and special sauce. It may not sound appetizing, but it's quite delicious. Takoyaki chips, on the other hand, are an offense to everything God and the Irish ever intended for potatoes. So bizarre they've earned their

own Website at www.gindaco.com.



DEEP SEA SICK

Squid jerky, 100¥

You live in an island country, you eat sea-food. You live in a crowded country, you eat convenience store food. Here's a perfect mix of the two: squid jerky. Rubbery on the outside and, uh, rubbery on the inside, no convenience store is complete without it. Visit www.goshoku.co.jp if you dare.

■ KUMAR SIVASUBRAMANIAN

TOUCH OF TENCHI

Tenchi Muyo Ryoko Alternate mini-bust, \$45

Ever accidentally break a shrine's seal and awaken a demon from a 700-year imprisonment? Yeah, us neither. But if we did, we hope the demon would look just like Ryoko, the hot tomato from *Tenchi Muyo*. She's a little ticked off that she was trapped for so long and takes it out on poor high-schooler Tenchi Masaki, the student who released her. This special alternate mini-bust of Ryoko is 6 inches tall, limited to just 1000 pieces and features a variant paint scheme.



DEVILISHLY FUN

Micro-Devilman action figures, \$12.99 each

Remember when toys had good simple names? He-Man. Strawberry Shortcake. Heck, even "Smurfs" is a harmless-sounding group. Now we've got things like Spawn, Dirty Pair and this guy: Devilman. Actually, despite his evil name, this guy's pretty cool-looking. And these micro action figures from Takara are spiffy Japanese imports. This four-figure set, which includes Dagon, Dandarian, Dearboros and Dekabaria, sports standard articulation, along with added details like wings and arm and leg fins.



GO NAGAI FOR IT

Shin Getter Robo vinyl figure, \$34.99

Nothing, and we mean nothing, says holiday spirit like a giant ax-wielding robot! Based on Go Nagai's classic super-robot series *Getter Robo* comes this Japanese Import from Toycom. Standing some 12 inches tall, ol' mega mecha Shin Getter Robo features multiple points of articulation, spooky bat-like wings and a massive ax that stands over 15 inches tall. Your toys will never feel safer with this guy guarding the toy box.



BETTER GETTER

Getter Robo Choro Q, \$8.50 each

Getyer robots! Getyer robots here! Imported from Japan, these little suckers from Takara are super-deformed versions of Go Nagai's popular series. Each figure in this colorful robot trio not only transforms from ass-kicking robot to sleek ship by removing a torso, but they have a pull-back mechanism that'll send 'em scooting across your kitchen floor.



GETTER 1 AND GETTER GANG

WHAT A VAMP

Vampi resin statue, \$99.95

If we had to give our plasma to one of the undead, we can't think of anyone better than Vampi! For some reason, the sexy, red dental-floss-wearing Vampirella got even sexier when artist Kevin Lau gave her the anime treatment. Maybe it's that short jet-black hair. Or those big ol' eyes. Whatever the case, now, thanks to Anarchy Studios, you can get your very own Vampi 10-inch cold-cast resin statue. No garlic necessary.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Pioneer Anime candy bars, \$1.99 each

Perfect for stocking stuffers (and stuffing your mouth) this first series of Pioneer chocolate bars sports images from one of Pioneer's biggest anime, including *Trigun*, *Tenchi Muyo!*, *Niea Under 7* and *Soul Taker*. Flavors include milk chocolate, chocolate with caramel, chocolate with crispy rice and chocolate with almonds. A bold step for otaku snacks in America.



BIMMMID MEEEEAAAAA!

Battle of the Planets building block figures, \$19.99

For some reason, even though these G-Force guys dressed up in bird costumes, they still managed to look cool while kicking evil-doers' booties across the galaxy. The *Battle of the Planets* gang (otherwise known as *Gatchaman*) are now available as a set of building block figures with clear visors, weapons and fully sculpted faces. Each figure in this six-figure set imported from Yujin of Japan stands a full inch tall! Wow!



FINAL MEALS

Final Fantasy X lunch boxes; \$15.99 each

When you think Final Fantasy, you probably think of epic storylines, massive battles and intriguing characters, not to mention some killer video games! But now when you think Final Fantasy, you should think...lunch? Yep, lunch. Whip out the PB&J sandwiches and, a tall cool one, it's time for lunch-on-the-go thanks to these *Final Fantasy X* lunch boxes! Whether you choose Tidus or Yuna, each box features characters and scenes from January's upcoming PS2 masterpiece.



Every Dec. 26, freelance writer Andrew Kardon celebrates the ancient ritual of returning all of his holiday gifts for donut money. Sweet, sweet donut money.

DRAGON BALL Z
Collectible Card Game

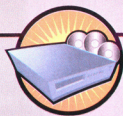
WWW.DBZCARDGAME.COM

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SCORE

FUNimation

VIDEO & DVD



IT'S A GIRL THING

ANIME AIN'T JUST ROBOTS ANYMORE

In Japan, there's an anime for everybody: men, women, grandmothers, cats—everyone. But in the early days of the American anime market, everything was for the guys, and most focused on violence or adult content.

Today, however, as anime awareness grows, more of the other kinds of anime are making it over here—particularly anime for women. As *shojo* (girl-targeted) anime series continue to reach our shores, the anime audience is widening to include more of the fairer gender: "The big

growing power is the number of women in college now who watched *Sailor Moon* on TV years ago," says Chris Beveridge, Webmaster of AnimeonDVD.com. "They're getting into college and being exposed to a wider variety of shows."

And they're not just for women, either; for guys who're tired of seeing big robots stomp on things, *shojo* anime can be a pleasant alternative, providing you can tolerate the "pretty-boy" males that are *shojo*'s trademark.

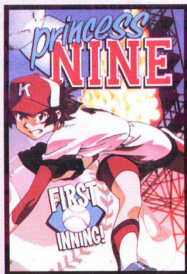
Here are some girl-friendly titles to look out for:



Angel Sanctuary — Rebellious angel Alexiel has been reincarnated as outcast teenager Setsuna, who is prophesied to be the savior of humanity. (CPM)



X/1999 — In the near future, the end of the world is at hand, and the power to decide the Earth's fate lies in the hands of an indifferent prettyboy named Kamui. (Manga Ent.)



Princess Nine — This sports anime, another genre already popular in Japan that's on the rise in the U.S., spotlights a women's baseball team that makes a run for the Japanese championship. (ADV Films) ■ *Chip Carter and Zach Oat*

TRAILERS

SIZE-SIZED NEWS FOR QUICK DIGESTION

OSCAR SPEECH As anime grows in popularity, more Hollywood stars can be found voicing DVDs. Pioneer Entertainment's *Armageddon III* featured the voices of Elizabeth Berkley and Keifer Sutherland, but they won't be featured in the upcoming sequel. Word is they've secured an Oscar-nominee actress to voice the title role instead.

DAT'S DTS Ready to really hear those mecha crash? While Bandai's *Jin-Roh* is one of the first anime DVDs to start using DTS (Digital Theatre System) sound, a system that delivers 5.1 channels of master quality audio without using up more disk space.

ORIGINAL ROBO AD Vision is bringing *Southern Cross* and *Genesis Climber Mospeada* to America on DVD. Best known as Robotech parts 2 and 3 (part 1 was *Macross*), this is the first time we'll see these series before they were rewritten to fit into *Robotech*. Don't forget: Animeigo is bringing the original *Macross* this year too. ■ CC



KNOW THIS NAME

AKITAROH DAICHI MAKES HISTORY INTO HILARITY

While the masters of anime have traditionally veered towards the dark and fantastic (Otomo's *Akira*, Oshii's *Ghost In The Shell*) or the younger audience (Miyazaki's *Totoro* or Tezuka's *Astro Boy*), there are some up-and-coming directors on the scene who are making fans take notice of a different genre: comedy. One of those is Akitaroh Daichi.

Cited as one of the few Japanese TV directors to make a mark on U.S. fandom, Daichi created the comedy series *Elf Princess Rane* in 1995 and *Kodomo No Omocha* ("Child's Toy," about a hyperactive child actress) in 1996 before developing his claim to fame, *Jubei-Chan the Ninja Girl* in 1999 (all three are now available in the U.S.). By twisting the legend of famed Japanese swordsman Jubei Yagyu into the story of an ordinary (if well-endowed) teenage girl who doesn't want to be a heroine, he created something young viewers can identify with and be comfortable laughing about.

Known for his frantic pace, slapstick style and tons of puns, Daichi is definitely a director to watch in the future.

■ CC



EASTERN EGGS

HIDDEN SECRETS OF YOUR FAVORITE DVDS

Ahhh, spring. When a young anime fan's thoughts turn to a new crop of *omake*—or, as we say in the States, Easter eggs! The hidden extras that producers put in DVDs can contain anything; here are a few of the recent ones found. (Warning: Some access methods may not work on all players!)

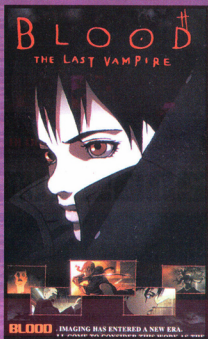
BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE

Screensavers and wallpapers featuring the characters are available by placing the disk in a CD-ROM drive and performing a Search.

DIRTY PAIR FLASH: ANGELS IN TROUBLE Highlight trailer 3 in the Extras menu. Click the right button, then the left button, then the up button to see a trailer for *Dirty Pair Flash 2*, with special commentary by Dan Rockwell.

TRIGUN, VOLUME 8 That darn cat! Go to the Scene Selection menu and choose the picture that leads to the preview of the next episode.

This works for episodes 23, 24 or 25, but by loading the chapter select for episode 26, the preview is replaced by a headline saying "Cat Found!" Accessing it displays Kuroneko concept art.



GETTER ROBO, VOLUME 2

For a short video of *Getter Robo's* ADR director discussing working on the DVD, click on "Extras," then click on "Behind the Scenes." Go to the listing for Genki and hit right, and the *Getter Robo* on the screen should turn red. Hit "Enter."

PHANTOM QUEST: PERFECT COLLECTION A pretty huge egg is available through two methods: In Extra Stuff, hit "73" and "Enter" on the remote. Or, try stopping the disc

entirely, outside of all menus. Select title, and then title 3 (sometimes title 3, chapter 1 may be necessary). Going through all of this accesses a 20-minute animated video, as well as a live-action recording session.

JUBEI-CHAN THE NINJA GIRL, VOLUME 3 A cool gallery with Yagyu Jubei sketches is accessed by going to Extras, and pressing the down button until the logo on Jubei-Chan's face is highlighted. Select the logo and it will open the gallery. ■ CC

ON THE SHELF

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR ANIME STORES THIS WINTER?

NOVEMBER RELEASES

AH! MY GODDESS, THE MOVIE

There's trouble in paradise, as Earthbound goddess Belldandy's mentor is caught trying to overthrow the Goddess system!

[Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98]

ARC THE LAD:
DAY OF RECKONING

Continuing the story of Elc's quest of revenge for the murder of his family. And will the element-controlling Arc survive the final confrontation with the sinister Clive? [ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98]

COWBOY BEBOP PERFECT
DVD COLLECTION

An off-beat story of a cool-as-a-cucumber bounty hunter and his associates, this limited collector's edition box comes with the original CD, interviews with the cast, creators and more! [Bandai; DVD, \$199.98]

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM
VOL. 4 AND VOL. 5

Continuing the awesome saga, Amuro Ray and his band of Earth refugees battle against the attacking Principality of Zeon with the awesome might of Mobile Suit Gundam! [Bandai; VHS, \$19.98 each; DVD, \$24.98 each]

SHADOW SKILL

In a war-torn world, one small group of heroes stands against the forces of darkness, armed only with their dedication and the superhuman martial art known as the Shadow Skill. [Manga Entertainment; VHS, \$19.95; DVD, \$29.95]

THOSE WHO HUNT ELVES:
READY, SET - STRIP

When a spell to return five humans to their world runs amok, it splits into five fragments that now appear as tattoos on the bodies of five elves. Now the quest begins to strip every elf they can lay their hands on until they find the missing spell pieces. [ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98]

TRIGUN BOX SET

Get all eight DVDs featuring the planet Gunsmoke's favorite—and klutziest—wanted man! [Pioneer Entertainment; DVD, \$199.98]

HOT PICK

Continuing the awesome saga, Amuro

G-SAVIOUR

January on DVD, \$29.98, Bandai Entertainment

As part of 1999's 20th anniversary of the *Mobile Suit Gundam* franchise, Sunrise productions created a two-hour television special entitled *G-Saviour*, marrying live actors with CG animation. The special was produced in conjunction with Polestar Group, a Los Angeles-based CG company. There were even on-location shots of America used as background material for the film. Unfortunately, it aired only in Japan last year.

Ex-Congressional pilot Mark Curran stumbles across a secret research project to produce a new energy source that could potentially end the severe food crisis. However, Congressional forces on Earth seek to suppress this discovery in order to maintain its control over the populace. Thrust into inevitable conflict, Curran must rely on the help of a secret organization known as the Illuminati and an advance mobile suit called the G-Saviour in order to protect the energy source at all cost.

This is the first time an anime has been translated into live action with CG effects, making it a benchmark for anime in general.



CGI The "G" stands for Gundam.

This January, Bandai is releasing this rare event on DVD. Special features include an interactive menu, Dolby Digital 5.1 Sound, a CG art gallery, Japanese language track, promotional spots and trailer.

DECEMBER RELEASES

DIRTY PAIR FLASH: ANGELS AT
WORLD'S END

With a gang of android hitwomen and cross-dressing assassins on their tails, the Lovely Angels find that it's a very small world after all when a mysterious killer wants them dead. [ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98]

GETTER ROBO: ARMAGEDDON -
SALVATION

The awesome robotic Getters face their endgame as the Getter Dragon shakes Earth with its terrifying power! [ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98]

HAND MAID MAY:
MEMORY FAILURE

Wind up the adventures of the helpful May in this last volume! [Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$24.98; DVD, \$29.98]

Soul Hunter



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Courage, Determination and a Strong Heart.

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Translator Notes
Clean Opening Animation
Relationship Tree with Character Descriptions
Voice Actor Profiles



HOT PICK

VANDREAD VOL. 1

January 22, 2002 on VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98, Pioneer Entertainment

The last battle of the sexes will be fought in space! In *Vandread*, men and women have been apart for three generations and are now at war with each other. (The first episode opens with a wartime propaganda film for the male soldiers, proclaiming "Women Are Monsters!") A tongue-in-cheek look at gender roles and space mecha, *Vandread* forces the two genders to overcome their differences and work together to fight invading aliens.

Gearred to a male audience with an emphasis on beautiful women and dazzling CG effects, this unapologetic eye-candy is the newest from Gonzo Studios, the creators of *Blue Submarine Number 6* and *Gate Keepers*. This series is fresh and fun, combining eye-popping digital animation with the traditional cel animation. The first of four volumes, the disk contains four of 26 episodes. Perhaps one of the more remarkable facts about this series is how quickly it is making the transition to American release—it just aired in Tokyo last summer! Pioneer's new trend of



compressing the typical lag time between Japanese and domestic releases (also evident in Pioneer's *The Soul Taker*) sets a new standard for eager fans.

HOT PICK

LOVE HINA

February on DVD, \$29.98; DVD Collector's Box, \$34.98, Bandai Entertainment

Keitaro and his childhood sweetheart make a pact to reunite at college. Years later, Keitaro is a daydreamer who's forgotten his childhood love's name—and is unable to even get into college! When he becomes the girl's dorm manager at the university, he meets up with a building full of young women—one of whom may or may not be his one-time love! A raucous and sweet comedy by one of the hottest animation companies, Production IG (of *Ghost In The Shell* fame), *Love Hina* is one of the most popular new series from Japan in recent years. Fans have anxiously been awaiting this 24-episode series, and the DVD of the first volume will be released in two versions: one regular edition and one in a Collector's Box.



NADIA, SECRET OF BLUE WATER - NEMO'S FORTRESS

From the depths of Atlantis, the crew of the Nautilus must now journey to the frozen continent of Antarctica. (ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

NIEA UNDER 7: SAYONARA BLUES

The final chapter in the heartwarming story of a girl and her alien! (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, 19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

ROBOTECH: THE ROBOTECH MASTERS - COUNTER ATTACK

The Robotech Defense Forces plan an all-out counter attack against the Robotech Masters. (ADV Films; DVD, \$14.98)

ROBOTECH: THE ROBOTECH MASTERS - THE FINAL SOLUTION

Victory in the second Robotech War will be decided, not by superior strength, but rather by a willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice. The powerful conclusion of the second act of the epic, multi-generational Robotech Saga. (ADV Films; DVD, \$14.98)

ROBOTECH: THE ROBOTECH MASTERS LEGACY BOX 5

This fifth volume of the Robotech Legacy Collection contains episodes 49 through 60, as well as an exclusive bonus disc containing footage from the original Japanese series, behind the scenes animation art, international clips and more. (ADV Films; DVD, \$44.98)

SAKURA DIARIES COLLECTOR'S EDITION DVD

Urara has been in love with her college-bound cousin Touma since childhood, but his sights are set on the classy Miek! Contains the subtitled version of the entire series on two discs. (ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$44.98. 18 years old and up.)

SOUL HUNTER: TAIKOBABU'S MISSION

All the Sages at Kun-Lun Mountain

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EPISODES
POWERS



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of the Moon
I will
Punish you!

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Pioneer

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HOT PICK

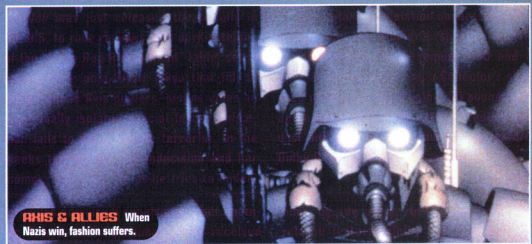
JIN-ROH: THE WOLF BRIGADE

March on DVD, \$29.98; DVD Special Edition, \$59.98, Bandai Entertainment

Written by Mamoru Oshii (director of the classic *Ghost In The Shell*) and directed by Hiroaki Okiura (Akira's animation director), *Jin-Roh* was just released theatrically in the U.S. to rave reviews. The dark retelling of the "Little Red Riding Hood" fable, set in an alternate post-WWII Tokyo that fell to the European Axis powers, begins when an emotionally isolated special forces policeman fails to kill a suicide terrorist. In the weeks that follow, his indecision and her memory haunt his life as he tries to under-

stand himself and his world and answer the question, "Who is the wolf, and who is the man?"

Breathtaking animation underscores the action and the soldier's spiritual quest. Bandai is releasing a regular DVD and a Special Edition, featuring a Collector's slip-case packaging, the original CD soundtrack and a bonus DVD with extras, trailers and cast and creator interviews. Both feature Dolby Digital 5.1 and DTS audio.



AKIS & ALLIES When Nazis win, fashion suffers.

HOT PICK

VAMPIRE HUNTER D: BLOODLUST

February 12 on VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$24.98, Urban Vision

"The tables turned, the secrets revealed and the hunters have become the hunted." The chilling sequel to the insanely popular *Vampire Hunter D* film and series finds the enigmatic D vying for an incredible reward if he can save a young woman kidnapped by the cruel vampire Meier Link. But he's not the only one looking for the reward—a team of trained bounty hunters have their eyes on the prize, too. From rocket launchers to ancient vampire magic, neither the pursuers nor the pursued will yield without a fight. But what evil is really behind the chase?

Produced by the premier anime studio Madhouse (responsible for over 12 feature anime films, including *Metropolis*, as well as work on Todd McFarlane's HBO series *Spawn*), *Bloodlust* provides one visual experience after another. This beautifully animated film received excellent reviews during its theatrical



D-LICIOUS At least this vampire slayer movie got a sequel.

release, called "a handsome, well-executed film" by the *New York Times*. The DVD release features Dolby Digital 5.1 sound, trailers, interviews and more.

needed was a young immortal who was willing to risk everything. But all they could find was Taikun! His mission: capture the souls of all of the evil beings that pose a threat to the Yin Dynasty. (ADV Films; DVD, \$29.98)

JANUARY RELEASES

CLEOPATRA DC

Leader of the powerful Corns Group, Cleopatra Corns can't sit behind a desk and take meetings. Her Palm Pilot has a "To-Do" list of rescuing people, defusing nuclear warheads and foiling the mysterious Sleider Group's plans for world domination. (AnimeWorks; VHS, \$19.98, DVD, \$29.95)

FUDOH

Riki Fudoh witnessed his brother's grisly murder at the hands of his own father. Now Riki recruits his own criminal organization to bring down the old generation of Yakuza bosses! (Tokyo Shock; DVD, \$29.95. 18 years old and up.)

GATE KEEPERS VOLUME 2

As strange invaders overrun Earth, only a gate-opening, dimension-hopping band of teenagers can save the planet. (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

KITE: DIRECTOR'S CUT

Sawa's a cold-blooded killer, and, if you're on the wrong side of the law, you may be her next target. Now, for the first time in the United States, the story of Kite is available on DVD in all its original glory, with previously unreleased footage. (Kitty Media; DVD, \$29.95. 18 years old and up.)

LEVEL C

Haruno wants to use Mizuki, a popular fashion model, for her company's latest promotion. So she uses her twin brother, Kazo, to seduce the young supermodel, but things soon escalate beyond business as usual! (KittyMedia; VHS, \$24.95. 18 years old and up.)

MADONNA

Mako, a sexy young teacher, only wants to enlighten young minds—even a class full of misfits. If their antics don't force her to quit, then her principal's brilliant idea of making her the new rugby coach will. (AnimeWorks; DVD, \$24.95)

SABER MARIONETTE J AGAIN

In this sequel to SMJ, Otaru now has seven robotic "marionettes" living in his house, learning how to be human. Features the complete series on a two-disc set. (Bandai Entertainment; DVD, \$34.98)

SAILOR MOON: INVADERS FROM THE FUTURE!

There's trickery and deception ahead as the invaders from the Negamoon continue in their attempts to foil Sailor Moon. (ADV Films; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

SAILOR MOON SUPER S VOL. 1

New powers! New villains! More see-through parts of their sailor uniforms. (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

STRANGE DAWN VOLUME 1

What would you do if you found yourself in a world half your size? To make matters even more complicated, the inhabitants of this world think Emi and Yuko are the legendary protectors of their country. (Urban Vision; VHS, \$24.95; DVD, \$29.95)

ZERO WOMAN RETURNS

The most beautiful and deadly operative of Section Zero is back and meets a man without a past—her perfect mate. (Tokyo Shock; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.95)

FEBRUARY RELEASES

ADVENTURES OF THE MINI GODDESS VOLUME 1

Follow Urd, Skuld, Gan and Belldandy's miniature adventures in the first of four volumes! (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

PRETTY SAMMY DVD COLLECTION

Get all of Magical Girl Pretty Sammy's adventures at once, including the rare Mihoshi Special episode from Tenchi Muyo. (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, \$19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

SHERLOCK HOUND

From Hayao Miyazaki, the force behind Totoro and Princess Mononoke, comes the mystery-solving adventures of world's greatest canine detective. (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, 19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

THE SOUL TAKER, VOL. 1

A young boy's mother tries to kill him and, as he struggles to find out why, he discovers he is more than human. (Pioneer Entertainment; VHS, 19.98; DVD, \$29.98)

MARCH RELEASES

ASTRO BOY TV SERIES

The very first anime to reach America does it again, in this never-domestically-broadcast 1980s version. Only available on VHS due to rights issues, this is still an anime not to be missed. (Manga Entertainment; VHS, \$19.95)

FIST OF THE NORTH STAR

Kenshiro, master of the most brutal martial art of all, is chosen to restore civilization after nuclear war. The first DVD contains the previously released CHS episodes; future releases will contain new episodes never released domestically. (Manga Entertainment; DVD, \$29.95)

HOT PICK

EVANGELION-DEATH AND REBIRTH/ THE END OF EVANGELION

Spring on DVD, \$29.98; Urban Vision

There was a considerable effort to release the *Neon Genesis Evangelion* movies theatrically last year, but production problems made it impossible. Now, the wait is over for *Evangelion* fans—these two films will finally hit stores in DVD format!

With *Death and Rebirth*, *NGE* fans can relive the series' greatest moments: kinetic action sequences, powerful insights into human interaction...and giant, kick-ass mechas! *The End of Evangelion* is the ultimate chapter in the series, and as usual, it features cutting-edge animation from two of Japan's hottest animation studios (Production IG and Studio Gainax). The release is tentatively scheduled for Spring 2002, and the DVD will consist of lots of special features, including actor interviews.

The fate of Shinji, the reluctant pilot



who is the only one capable of meeting the cataclysmic threat of the invading Angels, is not to be missed by *NGE* fans!

TELEVISION



UNLIMITED FANTASIES

THE SPIRIT OF FINAL FANTASY INVADES JAPANESE TV!

Are you a Final Fantasy fan who felt a little disappointed by this summer's *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* feature film? Well, maybe TV can do a better job of capturing the magic of the best-selling RPG video game series.

Already hitting the small screen in Japan is *Final Fantasy: Unlimited*, an FF anime TV series!

Just like the games, the show is entirely new and not a sequel to any previous incarnations, so anyone should be able to jump on board without any prior knowledge of the Final Fantasy universe. Based on Earth, the story centers around the apocalyptic appearance of a black pillar off the coast of Japan. A husband and wife exploration team go through this gate, which is spawning monsters the likes of which our planet has never seen. Successfully returning, they chronicle their adventures in a travelogue. When they fail to return from a second trip, their kids decide to mount a rescue operation.

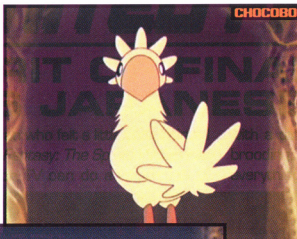
Brother and sister Yuu and Ai Hayakawa ally themselves

with a dimension native named Lisa and antihero Wind—a brooding, dark figure who carries a really big gun. But behind everything seems to be The Cloud, a villain who destroyed Wind's family and village!

This adaptation seems closer to the spirit (pun intended) of the Final Fantasy series: dramatic backdrops, a sweeping score, freaky monsters, magic and airships. There's even a Chocobo in it! You can check the trailer and opening animation for yourself at http://www.animatedaisuk.com/latest_anime/oa-ffu-0110.htm.

Produced by GONZO Studios, the makers of *Blue Submarine No. 6*, this adaptation will feature their signature blend of cel and CGI animation. Another good sign is that the production team's resume includes impressive titles like the SaGa Series, *Pokémon*, *Devilman* and *Gundam*. Outside of Japan, you'll have to settle for watching the 30-second trailers that are online, but they look pretty tempting.

While Square has not announced any plans for the domestic release of Final Fantasy Unlimited as of yet, there's always hope that it might come, given how many Final Fantasy fans live over here. Meanwhile, watch the trailers and keep your moogles crossed. ■ **Karl Cramer**



TUNE IN TOKYO

BE A FAN OF A SHOW ONLY ON THE AIR IN JAPAN

PROJECT ARMS

If you have a taste for *X-Files*-esque conspiracies and a hunger for Japanese anime, why not combine them to get something even better than Reese's Peanut Butter Cups? *Project Arms* is a show currently on Japanese airwaves that has a creepy feel to it with lots of stylish sci-fi action and violence.

After a severe accident when he was a young boy, Ryo Takatsuki always felt there was something different about his right arm.

But it's not until he meets Hayato Shingu, a new student out to get him, that he learns what it is—during fights, his arm erupts into a monstrous, mutant limb!

But Hayato's got one too! The 15-episode story involves alien DNA, government black projects and tons of high school angst. This is not likely to be on FoxKids anytime soon, but it's a good candidate for the Action Movie Channel. ■ **KC**



DOG DAYS OF ANIME

RUMIKO TAKAHASHI'S HIT INU-YASHA ON ITS WAY

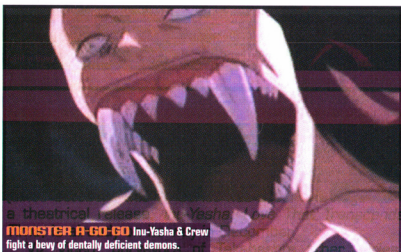
Because of sexual nature and its gender-bending humor, mainstream American TV will probably never see Rumiko Takahashi's hilarious *Ranma 1/2* series. But chances are good they'll see her new one. Takahashi's *Inu-Yasha* ("Dog-Demon") anime series is currently on the airwaves of Fuji TV, and has been getting rave reviews for its movie-quality animation, fast action, horror/suspense and light-hearted humor. Sunrise Studios has done an A+ job of faithfully bringing the series to life. In a very short time (since October), this TV series has become a huge hit—a theatrical release, *Inu-Yasha: Love That Transcends Time*, is already on its way in December.

Viz Video, purveyors of Takahashi's other series, *Maison Ikkoku* and *Ranma 1/2*, have snagged the rights to distribute the series here in America, but they're holding out for a real television release before they release it to video and DVD.

If you haven't read the popular manga English adaptation by Viz Comics (shame on you), the TV series is about Kagome, a young girl who gets dragged through an ancient well into medieval Japan. She finds that she's the reincarnation of Kikyo, a warrior priestess who has trapped a half-human/half-dog demon named Inu-Yasha. Grudgingly, they team up in search of the shards of the Shikon Jewel. But Kagome is not just stuck in the past—she often goes back to the modern world to get handy items. Can a modern girl and an ancient dog-demon find adventure, action, horror and romance? The answer is yes, but can their tale find their way to America? Check out the trailer and cross your fingers. ■ **KC**



DOG DAYS Can schoolgirl Kagome and demon Inu-Yasha fall in love? It's Takahashi...



a theatrical release, *Inu-Yasha: Love That Transcends Time*.
MONSTER R-GO-GO Inu-Yasha & Crew fight a bevy of dentally deficient demons.

ON THE AIR

UPDATING AND INFORMING YOU ON BOOB-TUBE GOINGS-ON

ACTION MOVIE CHANNEL

The best-kept secret in TV anime (they always show anime uncensored) has the *Bubblegum Crisis Tokyo 2040* and *Cyber City Oedo 808* TV series. Feature films include *Ghost in the Shell*, *Tekken: The Movie*, and *Patlabor 2*. Check your local listing for syndicated air times, usually late night on weekends.



GHOST IN THE SHELL

CARTOON NETWORK

Toonami: weekdays from 5-7 p.m. and 12-1 a.m. This block already includes *8th MS Team*, *Dragon Ball*, *Dragon Ball Z*, and *Outlaw Star*. New episodes of *Dragon Ball Z* are planned and they've added *Zoids*, a series about colonists who discover a planet of mechanical life forms, at 5 p.m.

Midnight Run: During Toonami's late-night time block, *Mobile Suit Gundam 0080: War in the Pocket* debuts, and watch for the return of Daft Punk's anime music videos—all done by legend Leiji Matsumoto.

Cowboy Bebop: Sat. 12-1 a.m. with encores on Thursday. Bounty hunters, gamblers, gangsters in space all set to music. See you there, Space Cowboy.

FOX KIDS

Digimon: weekdays 3:30 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m. Look for brand-new master villain Sovereign Digimon in the Digimon Deva story arc.

Medabots: Sat. 9:30 a.m. In the future, every kid has a pet robot, except Ikki. But finders keepers, losers weepers—he finds a rare bot brain that he can use in an old Medabot. The first season of Medabots has 26 episodes.

Transformers: Robots in Disguise: weekdays 2:30 p.m., **DIGIMON** Sat. 8 a.m. As more episodes are shown, expect to see new Transformers like Ultra Magnus, mini-ninja bots and the debut of the Predacon Decepticons!

KIDS' WB!

Cardcaptors: weekdays 3 p.m. Sakura and the other Cardcaptors discover some of their friends are not who they appear to be.

Pokemon: weekdays 3:30-4:30 p.m., Sat. 8 & 10 a.m. The Johto Journeys continue. And look for the Orange Island saga.

Yu-Gi-Oh: Sat. 11:30 a.m. It's like if the *Magic: The Gathering* CCG actually casted spells. ■ **KC**



YU-GI-OH

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE?

WHAT'S UP WITH TRANSFORMERS AND POKÉMON?

The Autobots are back, baby! But the new show, *Transformers: Robots in Disguise*, is Transformers for the Pokémon generation. After watching both shows on Saturday morning, we noticed more than a few similarities.

POKÉMON

GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL

There's a Pokémon for every conceivable environment or situation: grass-type, water-type, electric-type.... The list goes on and on. There's like 251 Pokémon at last count.

BRAND RECOGNITION

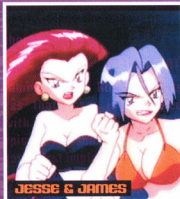
The name of each Pokémon they encounter is repeated ad nauseam until it's drilled into the heads of every kid watching.

THE MICHAEL J. FOX FACTOR

Pikachu is a spunky, little yellow mouse with a chip on his shoulder.

ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE

James of Team Rocket always has that rose, is obsessed with clothes and, in one episode not shown in the U.S., got breast implants. Draw your own conclusions.



JESSE & JAMES

KIDS WITH BIG EYES

The Pokémon are helped by trainers Ash, Misty and Brock. (There was also that loser Tracy.)

FRIENDLY FIRE

Trainers yell out attack commands to their Pokémon in battle. Since the opponent knows what's coming, why doesn't he just counter the move?

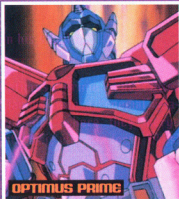
TRANSFORMERS

Anything that's somewhat mechanical, there's a Transformer version of it. Fire engine, space shuttle, bullet train... The list goes on and on. There's god-knows-how-many at this point.

Before each change, the new Transformers yell out their name and say, "Transform!" That way kids will know which toy to ask Santa for.

Wedge is a spunky, little yellow bulldozer with a chip on his shoulder.

Optimus Prime and Ultra Magnus have a "special relationship" where they merge into their ultimate form. Yikes!



OPTIMUS PRIME

Like giant mecha of mass destruction need any help, Transformers have Koji and T-Ri around for some reason.

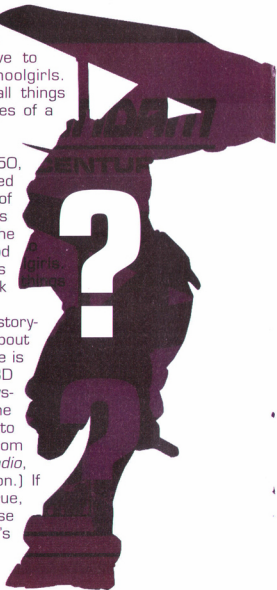
In the new Transformers, everybody shouts out whatever weapon they're going to use before they do. So why doesn't the enemy just dodge it?

THE NEXT GUNDAM

THE UNIVERSAL CENTURIES ROLL ON

Normally we don't report on rumors, but this one is so juicy we have to squeal like Japanese schoolgirls. Sunrise, the studio behind all things Gundam, is in the early stages of a new Gundam TV series! Set long after the One Year War in Universal Century 250, this Gundam series is supposed to be about the dark side of prolonged peace. Humanity's population is overcrowding the entire solar system! With food and water getting scarce, it's inevitable that war will break out once again.

But the next generation storyline isn't the only cool thing about this show. Supposedly, Sunrise is experimenting with a new 3D CGI cel-shaded animation system. (Perhaps, related to the recent news that Sega wants to adapt that same technology from their games, like *Jet Grind Radio*, in the production of animation.) If this unconfirmed story is true, look to 2004 as a likely release date—just in time for Gundam's 25th anniversary! ■ KC



HIGH SCHOOL BLUES

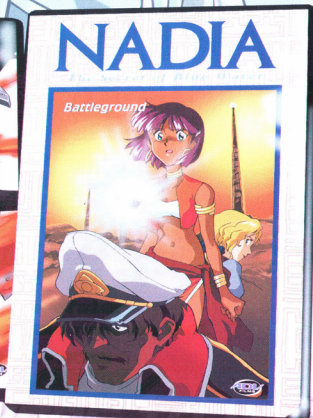
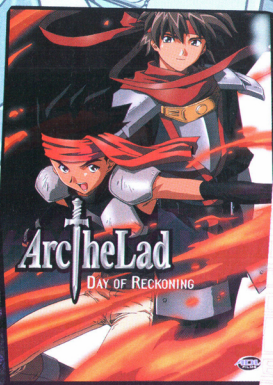
TOKYOPOP DELIVERS SAMURAI GIRL! TO AMERICA

This summer in Japan, a series debuted that is already making its way to American shores: *Real Bout High School. Licensed to TokyoPop, who plans to retitle the series as *Samurai Girl!*, it still hasn't been announced what format (TV or DVD) it will be shown on, but broadcast seems likely.*

Based on a series of novels, *Real Bout* is the story of Ryoko Mitsuugi, a high school girl obsessed with Kendo—a sport based on fencing and swordsmanship. But her school has a unorthodox method for resolving disputes—the K-Fight! Students settle their scores by duking it out! Whoever wins gets their way. Being an undefeated champion, high school is pretty sweet for Ryoko. That is, until weird people and monsters start showing up. It is anime, after all... ■ KC



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BIG ADVENTURE...
WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY
FOR SOME ACTION...**



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Orphen, Arc the Lad, Nadia: Secret of Blue Water

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THEATRICAL



VISITING METROPOLIS

AKIRA'S KATSUHIRO OTOMO BRINGS TEZUKA CLASSIC TO BIG SCREEN



BIG CITY! Robot Tama & detective Kenichi gaze at the slums of Metropolis.

Though it's probably not apparent to the casual fan, there is a subtle irony to the movie *Metropolis*. The production was originally scheduled to open in American theaters during November, but following the attack on the World Trade Center, the powers-that-be at Tristar Pictures decided to delay its debut until January 2002.

What's poignant about this postponement is that, while some scenes do feature buildings being destroyed, the film's key message really addresses tolerance and understanding.

"When I created the images for the futuristic city in *Metropolis*, in my mind I imagined Manhattan," admits director Rintaro (X/1999).

"So American audiences will feel a little bit closer to, or at least familiar with, the imagery.

Written by Akira creator Katsuhiro Otomo, the movie documents a violent struggle between humans and robots in a tightly controlled, ultramodern megalopolis and is based on a classic manga written in the late 1940s by the legendary Osamu Tezuka. However, despite this vintage source, viewers shouldn't expect an old-fashioned anime adventure. Rintaro—who worked with Tezuka in the early 1960s on landmark animated TV shows like *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion*—has intertwined the latest computer graphic techniques and conventional cell animation to generate a truly awe-inspiring tale.

"When you watch *Metropolis*, there are actually two different worlds: the ground-level society and the underground society," he explains. "The ground-level society is made up of buildings and streets and pavement, and I thought using the digital medium would be the perfect way to emphasize its cold, metallic feel. But I'm also interested in combining traditional animation with the newest technology."

It's an innovative technique, and one the director is particularly thrilled American viewers will have the opportunity to experience in theaters.

"I'd much rather have the audience see this film on the big screen," claims Rintaro "it will have a totally different impact than watching the images on video." ■ Jeff Berkwitz

THE BUZZ

ESCAFLOWNE FLIES IN Bandai Entertainment intends to begin a limited nationwide roll out of the long-awaited *Escaflowne: A Girl in Gaea* motion picture—loosely based on the popular *Vision of Escaflowne* TV series—in early 2002.

The company also might issue *Char's Counterattack*, the first original Gundam-based theatrical film, later in the year.

GHIBLI HOWLS!

According to fantasy author Diana Wynne Jones, Hayao Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli will produce an anime version of her novel, *Howl's Moving Castle*. Disney likely will distribute the picture—tentatively scheduled for a 2003 release—in the United States.

ADV ARRESTED

ADV Films currently is considering bringing both *You're Under Arrest: The Movie* and *Nadesico: The Movie—The Prince of Darkness* to American theaters, along with a couple of live-action Japanese "kaiju" flicks: *Gamera 2: The Advent of Legion* and *Gamera 3: Revenge of Irys*.



BEDDY-BYEBE Right now, *Escaflowne's* Hitomi is a girl in slumberland.

'TICKETS, PLEASE?'

SEEN ANIME IN A THEATRE? YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT IT TOOK TO GET IT THERE.

Think it's easy for American anime companies to book movies into theaters? Better think again! According to Matt Greenfield, co-founder of ADV Films and the English Language Producer of the new motion picture *Spriggan*, getting an anime feature shown at the local cineplex is a major undertaking.

"For most video-based distributors, a 'theatrical release' has traditionally meant going the art-house route, with just a

few prints going from city to city," says Greenfield. "For *Spriggan*, we have a much larger number of prints, which allows the film to keep running in a number of theaters while new prints start running in others."

The process, Greenfield said, is called platforming. It's how *Crouching Tiger; Hidden Dragon* was handled. "However, in order to manage a larger release like this, we had to first build the internal infrastructure," Greenfield says. "That took a bit of time, and then there was the issue of working within the parameters of the release schedule of the so-called major studios."

Nonetheless, the folks at ADV believe their exhaustive efforts are worthwhile, particularly for a production like *Spriggan*. "*Spriggan* is a spectacle, and unless you see it on the big screen, that sense of scale will be proportionately diminished," said Greenfield. "It is the same difference as seeing *Star Wars* or *Raiders of the Lost Ark* on home video after seeing it in the theater. Although it's still quite enjoyable, the sense of awe and wonder will never be as big, even if you do have a big-screen HDTV with a progressive DVD player and THX surround sound system."

Directed by Hirotugu Kawasaki, with production supervision supplied by Katsuhiro Otomo (creator of *Akira*), *Spriggan* is playing at selected theaters throughout the country. ■ JB



SPRIGGAN FOWARD Find out high school student Ominae Yu's horrifying secret in art-house theaters.

COMING SOON?

PLACE YOUR BETS.

Only a few anime movies ever make it out of Japan. Here's a look at recent Japanese hits and the odds of them crossing the Pacific into American theaters.



DRAGON SUMMONING This may be all you'll see of *Spirited Away*.

SPIRITED AWAY

Although Hayao Miyazaki's latest production is the highest-grossing anime film in Japanese history, animation aficionados shouldn't expect to see it any time soon. Disney owns the American rights, but has given no indication they have any plans to release the movie—in any format—in the foreseeable future. ODDS: 25-to-1.

COWBOY BEBOP: KNOCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR

Given the popularity of *Cowboy Bebop* here, there's little question that this spin-off movie will be released eventually. The show's adult appeal might warrant a few art-house screenings, but it's more likely fans will have to settle for a DVD. ODDS: 8-to-1.

MILLENNIUM ACTRESS

This impressive feature from director Satoshi Kon (*Perfect Blue*) received its world premiere at Canada's Fantasia Film Festival 2001, but probably won't hit screens here for a year or two. The tale of an aging movie star reflecting on her past, should ensure at least a brief art-house run. ODDS: 4-to-1. ■ JB

JAPANESE BOX OFFICE

THE ANIME SCENE IS BLOWN AWAY

In spite of Hollywood competition, 2001 has still been the biggest year ever for Japanese animation. In only 69 days, Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* has become the highest grossing film in Japanese history, grossing over 26 billion Yen in just 69 days—it took *Titanic* over a year to reach that figure. Osamu Tezuka's 1949 manga classic *Metropolis* got a state of the art-update thanks to a script by Katsuhiro Otomo, and lots of kids' stuff got balanced by philosophical mindbenders like Mamoru Oshii's first live-action feature *Avalon* and the long-awaited big screen version of *Cowboy Bebop*. ■ KUMAR SIVASUBRAMANIAN

BEST PERFORMING JAPANESE ANIME IN 2001

RANK	TITLE	DISTRIBUTOR	RELEASE DATE	WEEKS IN TOP 10	HIGHEST RANK
1	<i>Spirited Away</i>	Toho/Shibui	July 20	2	1
2	<i>One Piece/Digimon 2</i> (double feature)	Toei/Saban	March 3	5	1
3	<i>Pokemon: Celebi—A Timeless Encounter</i>	Toho/Nintendo	July 6	8	2
4	<i>Boramen: Nobita and the Winged Heroes</i>	Toho	March 10	6	2
5	<i>Metropolis</i>	Toho/Madhouse	May 26	4	3
6	<i>Famous Detective Conan: Countdown To Heaven</i>	Toho	April 21	4	3
7	<i>Final Fantasy</i>	Gage Humax	Sept. 15	3	2
8	<i>Crayon Shin Chan</i>	Toho	April 21	3	5
9	<i>Cowboy Bebop</i>	Sony/Bandai	Sept. 1	3	5
10	<i>Avalon</i>	Herald Film Company	Jan. 20	2	5

ications manager of Square Electronic Arts. "We don't just produce 'nice' and 'cool' games, but epic games that tell grand stories and develop characters."

VIDEO GAMES



FANTASY STAR

SQUARESOFT'S FFX TO SET NEW STANDARD FOR GAMES IN 2002

Even if you don't play video games, chances are you've heard of *Final Fantasy*. Few video games have captured the world's attention like the long-running series, due to its consistent breakthrough graphics and incredible stories. *Final Fantasy X*, the newest release in the franchise from SquareSoft, has already stormed through Japan—in its first four days of release, 90 percent of the units of *FFX* that shipped were sold. It was also the first Japanese PlayStation 2 title to hit the 2-million-unit sales mark.

"From the success of the series—the only video game series to reach its 10th installment—we can say that Final Fantasy games in Japan are treated the way movies are in the States," says Kyoko Yamashita, marketing communications manager of Square Electronic Arts. "We don't just produce 'nice' and 'cool' games, but epic games that tell grand stories and develop engaging characters."

SquareSoft is expecting similar success when they release *FFX* in America this January. The game follows the exploits of Tidus, a star athlete in the fantastic sport of Blitzball, who is thrown into a quest to protect the land against the encroaching evil known only as Sin. It's also a return to the more realistic worlds and characters of *FFVII* and *FFVIII*, with a complex and beautiful story, painted in a bright palette of colors, rendered with gorgeous graphics and often called the best-looking PS2 game available.

Technologically, *Final Fantasy X* raises the RPG standard, as well. It is the first FF game to feature fully recorded speech and not just visual text. A whopping 9,000 lines of dialogue had to be translated and recorded. The battle system in *FFX* also has been updated—fights no longer take place in real time, but rely now on a turn-based system that allows for more strategic gameplay, and characters can now be exchanged during fights for more depth and customization.

Once you've devoured *FFX* for yourselves, you can already start drooling after *Final Fantasy XI*. Scheduled for a simultaneous worldwide release late in 2002 on multiple platforms, the game will be an entirely online experience. But rest assured—this won't be the final Final Fantasy either. ■ Christopher Carle



TIDUS FROM FINAL FANTASY X



BITS OF BYTES

THE LATEST WORD ON GAMING

SPACE BATTLE-GAME?

Bandai's releasing a PS2 game based on the classic anime series *Space Battleship Yamato* in Japan in December. The full title is *Space Battleship Yamato—Recollection of Iskandar*. The game will feature cel-shaded characters in a 3D world, as well as a large-scale space battle simulation.

PS2 KENGO II

Good news for PS2 fans—we have known for a while that *Kengo II* would grace the powerful Xbox hardware, but only recently was the game announced for the PlayStation 2. Developed by Genki, *Kengo II* features fierce and realistic samurai-style sword fights.

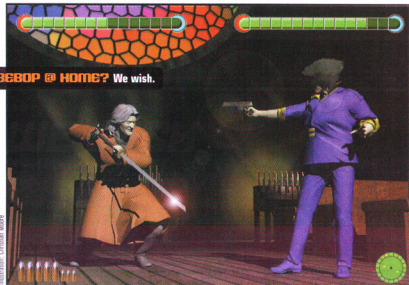
GUNDAM ONLINE

Capcom announced the arcade hit, *Mobile Suit Gundam: Federation vs. Zeon DX*, will get a December release in Japan. The game will feature online play using KDDI's Multi-Match system and will support up to four players per game, as well as feature a new single-player mission mode. ■ CC



WE WISH THINK OF IT, A GAME BASED ON...COWBOY BEBOP!

One of the world's coolest anime demands one of the world's coolest games. Gamers would play as Spike while they collect the bounty on criminals throughout the galaxy. It could run off the *Shenmue 2* engine, so players could talk to people for clues, search through seedy bars to find their quarry and hunt across planets through space for leads. When players finally find the baddie, the game switches to a third-person shooter/fighter, matching the awesome gunplay of the series and giving players a chance to whoop it up with some of Spike's Jeet Kun Do! And no matter what, the game has to be filled with the outstanding music that made *Cowboy Bebop* such a hit. ■ **Robert Bricken**



HOT TIPS SECRETS FOR THE BEST GAMERS ONLY

Shenmue 2: See Shenmue on the Saturn
Long before the Dreamcast, another ill-fated Sega system, the Saturn was slated to bring about Yu Suzuki's vision of Shenmue. That never happened, due in large part to the Saturn's early demise in America. Now, however, you can get a glimpse of what might have been. Beat the game and sit through the credits and you will be treated to a video clip of Shenmue running on the Saturn. Fancy that.

Devil May Cry: Unlock Tougher Modes

So you've conquered *Devil May Cry*. What now? More difficulty, that's what! Beat the game once and you'll unlock the "Hard" difficulty setting. Complete the game on "Hard" to earn the Legendary Dark Knight Mode. Triumph over that to get Dante Must Die Mode. Still not whupped? Beat Dante Must Die to unlock Super Dante mode. Happily, if you suck at the game, continuing a lot unlocks the Easy mode. ■ **CC**

DANTE FROM *DEVIL MAY CRY*

RELEASE SCHEDULE

WE PICK 'EM, YOU PLAY 'EM

12/4: *GRANDIA 2*

(Ubi Soft); PlayStation 2
PlayStation 2 owners get to sample firsthand what all the Dreamcast hullabaloo was about. This is, quite simply, one of the best fightin' RPGs around. \$49.99



12/4: *Shenmue 2*

(Sega); Dreamcast
One of the final games released for the unappreciated system is also one of the best. Using creator Yu Suzuki's revolutionary real-time/real-world gameplay introduced in the original (but this time with improved

graphics), the martial arts RPG continues the story of Ryu as he searches for his father's murderer. \$39.99

12/5: *MEGA MAN X6*

(Capcom); PlayStation
Can't get enough of the Mega Man? Capcom's got some medicine for your fever with *Mega Man X6*, the latest iteration in a long line of games. \$29.99



12/11: *JADE COCDON 2*

(Ubi Soft); PlayStation 2
Genki's latest RPG combines monster breeding and roleplaying elements in a jade cocktail of pure adventure. \$49.99



1/29/02: *TEKKEN ADVANCE*

(Namco-Hometek, Inc.); Game Boy Advance
Fighting fans will revel in the fact they can brawl Tekken-style with nine characters in a nice-looking portable game. \$39.99



2/15/02: *VIRTUA FIGHTER 4*

(Sega); PlayStation 2

Some would argue it's the best 3D fighting series of all time. No one could argue that *VF4* leads the video game pack in its depth of gameplay.

With even more characters, fighting styles and hyper-real game mechanics, *VF4* is a surefire hit. \$49.99 ■ **CC**

INTERNET



PAPERLESS MANGA

CDJAPAN.COM BRINGS THE JAPANESE NEWSSTAND TO YOU

They say we're moving to a paperless economy—and the manga market is lending a hand. Starting this past August, CDJapan (premier

Japanese pop culture Website, in general, and J-Pop music resource, in specific) and Kodansha Publishing (one of the bigwig manga publishers in Japan) launched e-Manga, an online service that provides a monthly dose of Japanese comics to subscribers via the Internet.

Billed as "new-style comic entertainment," e-Manga gives its subscribers 12-15 new comics a month, consisting of classics like Masashi Tanaka's *Gon*, the tale of a precocious and wayward dinosaur; and many original comics like Taro Matsumoto's *Meteor Girl*, Satoshi Fukushima's *G and Ah!* *Parasite* by Megumi Hanabusa. Some of the comics are exclusive to e-Manga, while others, like *Gon*, are new online versions of an already popular strip. Select titles will have sound to accompany them, and all of them are animated to some degree with Shockwave for an extra anime treat.

But this electronic bounty isn't just for the Japanese—

each and every e-Manga comes with English subtitles, making it a breeze to read for American fans as well.

Registration is also easy, via a totally English-language interface; after acquiring a CDJapan account and then subscribing, monthly payments of ¥800 (less than \$7) are deducted automatically from your credit card, and only your bank has to worry about converting yen to dollars.

You are sent access to the new e-Manga at the beginning of every month. And don't worry if you've missed the first few strips—you can always download a past "issue" of e-Manga for another 800 yen.

It's a great—and cheap—way to check out the sort of manga the Japanese get everyday, and not just what American companies think will work

in the American market. You get to see the manga exactly as the Japanese do—except with subtitles, of course—and in all genres: fantasy, sci-fi, comedy, romance, etc. But be warned: Some of the manga contains strong language and may not be suitable for the kiddies. For more info or to register, turn your browsers to www.cdjapan.co.jp/e-manga. ■ Robert Bricken



eMANGA Now on your desktop—comics!

ON SCREEN

▼ OFFICIAL WEBSITES EVERY OTAKU NEEDS

GUNDAM
www.gundamofficial.com
GundamOfficial.com breaks down each of the Gundam series that have made it to North America through character and mecha profiles, as well as an extensive glossary. There's also a sweet database of the Gundam swag available, such as DVDs, action figures and model kits!



AKIRA
www.akira2001.com
ANGEL SANCTUARY
www.centralparkmedia.com/angel/
BLUEN
www.bloodthemovie.com
BLUE GENDER
www.bluegender.com
CARDCAPTORS
www.clowbook.com
DIGIMON
www.funkids.com/tvsh
DRAGON BALL
www.dragonball.com
DRAGON BALL Z

EVANGELION
www.gainax.co.jp/anim/eva/evaindex-e.html
FATAL FURY
www.viz.com/products/series/fatalfury/index.html
FURUURI
www.gainax.co.jp/furi/index-e.html
FUSHIGI YUJI
www.viz.com/products/series/fushigiyuji/
GASARAKI
www.adfilms.com/gasarak/

GHOST IN THE SHELL
www.manga.com/ghos
IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLOR
www.lybor.com/perfectblue
POREMON
www.gakumon.com/sanctuary
SANCTUARY
www.viz.com/products/series/sanctuary/index.html
SIN
www.sinthemovie.com
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA
www.streetfighter.com

alpha.com
www.techitv.com
X THE MOVIE
www.manga.com/x/
And if you need a translation service to check out any Japanese sites, visit:
www.excite.co.jp/world/ur/
Plug in the address, hit the second radio button and then hit go!
■ Mike Bach

THE LOW-DOWNLOAD

ANIME ON THE WEB IS SPREADING LIKE A VIRUS

Internet-savvy otaku have it made—downloadable anime has blossomed into its own phenomenon this year.

Earlier this year, Toonami.com had full episodes of *Dragon Ball Z* and *Star Blazers* up for download at their Toonami Reactor. Although it's been on temporary hiatus lately, there's more on the way—the Toonami Reactor will be back in broadband business this month, with new, free shows that had yet to be announced as of press time. In addition, the Reactor will simultaneously show character profiles and story synopses during show downloads.

Looking for something different? Then go see the fans—there's a handful of fan-run sites out there that provide electronic fan-subbed non-mainstream anime. Both www.animedownload.net and www.anime-anime.com provide free, fan-subbed episodes—all on the legal up-and-up. It's anime you can't get anywhere else...well, except Japan. But it's cheaper than a plane ticket, and quicker too. ■ RB



HANGING 10

WHERE ANIME BIGWIGS SURF ONLINE

YOSHIOKAZU MIYAO

OCCUPATION: Mechanical/monster/character

designer, director, illustrator

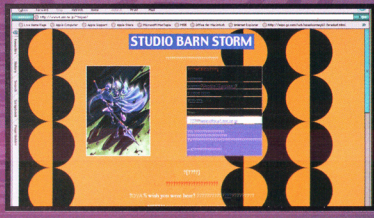
MAJOR WORKS: Mechanical designs for

Vandread, *Turn-A Gundam*

HOMEPAGE: www4.ocn.ne.jp/~miyao/



Miyao-san really likes art. His favorite Websites include *Junk Painting* (www.big.or.jp/~yoshio/) for the grand scale and "strong contrasts" of its game illustrations, and *Jo's Playground* (www.jo-chen.com) where *Racer X* comic artist Jo Chen demonstrates the "high art skill of a hyper-illustrator or manga writer." When looking for original work, he'll click over to *3RS Real* (www.geocities.co.jp/AnimeComic/5852/index.html), a long-running online manga. ■ RB



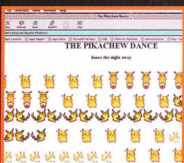
ANGER DANGER

WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES

THE PIKACHEW DANCE

online: <http://members.tripod.com/Dnsocho/PikaDance/>

If Nintendo's yellow rat gives you the creeps, then the synchronized dancing of dozens of Pikachus will certainly give you nightmares. All Pikachu, all dancing, all the time. No matter how strangely appealing it may sound, look away lest ye go mad.



AFRO KEN.COM

www.dreamkitty.com/afroken.html

Hello, Drugged-Out Ethnically Challenged Dogs! From the geniuses/madmen behind Hello Kitty, hyper-cute ambassador of the frighteningly adorable, comes a plot to steal our money and our sanity. Dogs in the Sanrio style with rainbow-colored afros and other bizarre fashion misjudgments make the disco era seem classy, tasteful and reserved.



WHITE CROSS

<http://members.tripod.com/~the-whitecross/>

A fan site to Weiss Kreuz, a show that initially appears promising. Four assassins dispensing justice with extreme prejudice sounds way cool! Then you get to the part about them being florists and you see the art of four pretty boys with dainty flowers in their pouting mouths. Dainty, pouting assassins. A shrine to something wrong on many, many levels.



BOOSKA'S RAMEN SNACKS REVIEW

<http://64.26.74.82/snacks/index2.html>



A Website about reviewing snacks; and not just any snacks, but specifically those endorsed by Booska himself. The nubby-horned, big-bellied mutant is a Japanese icon. But if you need to know what a creepy Japanese toy character thinks of Fried Tofu UFO Noodle Bowl, here's where you go.

■ Mike Dach

through the ideas sound familiar, and characters might be recognizable, these one-shots are far from the norm.

A ninja Spider-Man! A 20-foot-tall Godzilla-like Hulk!

Avengers that "assemble" to form a giant Voltron-ish robot! Punisher as a pretty-boy *shojo* manga?! Uncon-

ventional to say the least, Marvel didn't have many constraints on what could or couldn't be done with their core characters.

the result is a marriage of genres between manga and mainstream that will leave fans on both sides wanting more. "Once people read the books, they'll want to come back."

MANGA



MARVEL GOES MANGA

GAIJIN HEROES TURN JAPANESE THIS JANUARY

In January, the "M" in "Marvel" will also stand for "manga." That's right, the House of Ideas is taking a cue from the Far East and devoting a whole month to manga-style.

Spearheaded by Ben Dunn, best known for his work with *Ninja High School* (Antarctic Comics), the event spans five weeks and eight different comics titles: *Mangaverse: New Dawn*, *Punisher*, *Avengers Assemble*, *Spider-Man*, *Journey Into Mystery*, *Megascale Metatalent*, *Response Team Fantastic Four*, *X-Men Equinox* and *Mangaverse: Eternity Twilight*. Although the titles sound familiar and characters might be recognizable, these one-shots are far from the norm.

A ninja Spider-Man! A 20-foot-tall Godzilla-like Hulk! Avengers that "assemble" to form a giant Voltron-ish robot! Punisher as a pretty-boy *shojo* manga?! Uncon-

ventional to say the least, Marvel didn't have many constraints on what could or couldn't be done with their core characters.

"We kept it fairly loose as far as where we wanted to see it go," says Brian Smith, co-editor of the project. "We were more interested to see what people could come up with—how wacky they could make it, how far they could push it—while still retaining the core of what these characters are."

The result is a marriage of genres between manga and mainstream that will leave fans on both sides wanting more. "Once people read the books, they'll want to come back," says Smith. "I know the creative teams involved are definitely interested in doing more!" ■ **Jen Contino**



SPIDER-MAN



X-MEN EQUINOX



JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY

QUICK READS

PAGE TURNIN' NEWS CLIPS

COME TOGETHER

CPM Manga is set to print *Let's Stay Together*, the new series by popular manga artist Tomoko Taniguchi (*Princess Prince*, *Aquarium*, *Call Me Princess*). The six-issue limited series concerns the lives and loves of rock-and-roll high schoolers, and will feature cover art from apparent *shojo* manga fan and *Crow* creator James O'Barr.

GHOST IN THE MANGA

Rumor has it you can look for the work of a certain male manga superstar, who works like a machine, following a format upgrade for the manga collection mag *Super Manga Blast*. Dark Horse's 2002 revamp of its hit title is set to include the long-awaited serialization of a critically acclaimed manga, but we can't name names...

BUBBLEGUM DREAMS

Dreamwave Studios, they of the beautiful *Dark Minds* and *Warlands* comics, are looking to create a manga based on the classic anime series *Bubble Gum Crisis*, which is about four women in robotic suits fighting Terminator-like robots bent on taking over the world. ■ JC



TIME CRISIS Priss and the girls are here to kick butt and...never mind.

CHILD OF THE ATOM

ASTRO BOY HEADS FOR AMERICAN SHORES

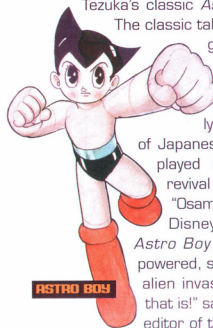
Who says the classics are dead? Dark Horse Comics doesn't—they're publishing Osamu Tezuka's classic *Astro Boy* series in its entirety.

The classic tale of the boy robot with a heart gets its Stateside release in March 2002.

Many of the "god of manga" Tezuka's creations, especially *Astro Boy*, are revered icons of Japanese pop culture. This popularity played a key role in Dark Horse's revival of the manga.

"Osamu Tezuka is considered the Walt Disney of Japanese animation, and *Astro Boy* is his Mickey Mouse—a jet-powered, super-strong, evil robot-bashing, alien invasion-smashing Mickey Mouse, that is!" says Dark Horse's Chris Warner, editor of the series' American debut.

Similar to their recent *Lone Wolf and Cub* re-releases, Dark Horse will package *Astro Boy* in 23 monthly black-and-white, "digest-sized" installments, roughly 200 pages each. ■ James McDonough



ASTRO BOY

MANGA BY THE NUMBERS

- 5** Percentage of American comics market aimed at girls
- 30** Percentage of Japanese comics, called *shojo*, aimed at girls
- 5** Members G-Force needs to protect the Earth from all invaders
- 7** Members the Justice League needs to do the same thing
- \$2.95** Average cost of a 24-page American comic book
- \$2.95** Average cost of a weekly 300-page Japanese manga magazine
- 6** Billions of U.S. dollars manga sales amount to in Japan
- 1968** Year *Shukan Shonen Jump* magazine was launched in Japan
- 4,000,000** Average weekly circulation today of *Shukan Shonen Jump* today

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE

SAILOR MOON: THE MANGA VS THE ANIME

Sailor Moon, the popular saga of sailor-suited superhero schoolgirls by Naoko Takeuchi, has plenty of cult followers. But if you're a fan of the comics published by TokyoPop and the anime shown on Cartoon Network, you'll have noticed a few differences. Big ones. We noticed 'em too. Here's what you're missing if you don't read the manga.

SECOND CHANCES

• In the anime, many villains repent to become heroes. Their reward is a new life on Earth and a chance to live peacefully.

• In the manga, most of the villains do NOT reform. Nephrite, Birdie, Avaru, Prisma, Catsy, and-whice, "digest-sized" installments, roughly 200 pages

Saffir and Professor Tomoe remain bad to the bone. Most end up being destroyed—not healed—by the Sailor Scouts.

DETAILS, PLEASE!

• In the anime, we only glimpse character backstories and motivations.

• In the manga, we learn the fine points about the Silver Millennium kingdom, past lives of Zoisite, Kunzite, Nephrite and Jadeite, the life of Sailor Pluto, the roll of the Death Busters, even the origins of important objects, like the three talismans!

maon units releases, In the manga, Sailor Mini

Moon, Rini, realizes her power in *Sailor Moon R*.

• In the anime, it isn't until the S season that Rini transforms.

• In the manga, Rini is seduced by the Dark Side, aged and becomes the Black Lady. But Sailor Pluto's death triggers Rini's memories of their friendship and snaps her back to the good.

• In the anime, Black Lady was brought back from the

Dark Side when Sailor Moon used her Silver Crystal and made

Rini remember her family.

Sailor Pluto wasn't killed in this part of the anime.

BEST PART

• Reading the manga, you don't have to listen to the dubbed niceties of "Sailor Moon Says..." and a wacky, tacked-on moral to the story. The real moral of *Sailor Moon*? The prettiest boys are always the most evil. ■ JC



COMING COMICS

MANGA TO WATCH FOR THIS WINTER!

DEC. 5, 2001

CARDCAPTOR SAKURA # 23 (TokyoPop)
Sakura's eager to capture the last Clow Card, but it might be the most troublesome yet! The deadly "Firey" card creates a terrible blaze that threatens to wipe out everything. When her other cards don't work, what can Sakura do to stop Firey? The battle's outcome will finally reveal all the mystery of Yueh and the Final Trial. **\$2.95**

OH MY GODDESS! PART XI # 5 (Dark Horse)
His "mystery child" seems like such a darling little boy—but as far as Keichi is concerned, this kid is a boyfriend's worst nightmare! He's monopolizing all of Beldandy's time and now beginning to invade her dreams. But why is the child so desperate for Beldandy to remember him? **\$2.99**

DEC. 12, 2001

AQUARIUM VOLUME ONE (CPM Manga)
When a young girl, Naoka, fails the competitive exam for her first-choice high school, she finds solace at the aquarium. Depressed, suicidal and feeling like a failure, not even the chance at love can snap her out of her sadness. Will anything be able to bring her back from the edge? **\$15.95**

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL #63: HUSK (Dark Horse)

Anotsu's trip to Kaga has unexpectedly turned sour. Ibane, the head of the sword school, may be a master martial artist—but he's also something of a master liar! Is it worth Anotsu filling his gang with Ibane's men when he might not trust them? **\$2.99**

CERES CELESTIAL LEGEND PART 2 # 1

(Viz Entertainment)
The wrath of Ceres has been unleashed due to the fear of a young woman, Aya. But surprisingly, her powers have no effect on Toya. Why is this person immune to Ceres' power and how will Aya's personality be returned this time? **\$2.95**

DRAGON BALL Z VOLUME SEVEN: ENTER THE GINYU FORCE (Viz Entertainment)

After years of training and battling the strongest that Earth has to offer, Son Goku has become the most powerful martial artist on the planet. But the stakes are increasing! He and his friends must fight the deadliest villains of all space and time to defend the Earth and the Dragon Balls, which can grant any wish! Will their power be enough? **\$12.95**

GUNDAM WING: BATTLEFIELD OF PACIFISTS

3 (TokyoPop)
Trowa and Duo are under attack by one of their closest friends, Quatre! The Perfect Peace People have brainwashed the young pilot in an attempt to eliminate the "Gundam threat." Will Trowa and Duo be able to break the spell or could this be the end of the Gundams? **\$2.95**

MAGICAL POKÉMON JOURNEY PART 6

2 (Viz Entertainment)
Hazel finds an egg floating down the river one day. Pikachu and Clefairy are acting as egg-sitters for Hazel, but while they are wondering what kind of Pokémon this will be, the rest of the Pokémon are wondering about what kind of omelet to make! Will this egg get to hatch on its own or become breakfast? **\$4.95**

MANGAPHILE # 14 (Radio Comix)

Mangaphile offers some of the best in American manga with articles and information for all readers. This black-and-white quarterly series is jam-packed with manga goodness. **\$3.99**

MIRACLE GIRLS # 15 (TokyoPop)

High school's not going to be easy for the Morgan twins, not with Mason Templar out to get them! But when misfortune happens to Templar's kid sister, the twins begin to believe he might not be their enemy, but instead just as much a victim as they are. So who's really behind all the bad things going on in their school? **\$2.95**

NO NEED FOR TENCHI! PART 12 # 5

(Viz Entertainment)
Sasami has the hiccups! Okay, so usually that isn't a life-or-death situation, but nothing is usual in the Tenchi universe. If Sasami hiccups 100 times, she will die! Will Tenchi figure out how to cure her before it's too late? **\$2.95**

REVOLUTIONARY GIRL UTENA VOLUME 1 (Viz Entertainment)

When she was young, Utena Tenjou fell into a roaring river, only to be rescued by a mysterious man—her prince. Since that day, Utena became determined to grow up not to be a princess, but a strong and noble prince. Can she achieve her goals? **\$15.95**

SLAYERS SPECIAL # 1 (CPM Manga)

Sorceress Lina Inverse returns in a brand-new adventure seeking treasure and kicks. A rival sorceress, Naga, starts following Lina hoping to horn in on her bounty and embarrass her.

HOT PICK

BASTARD! WIZARD # 1

(Viz Entertainment)

WHY IT'S COOL Reading *Bastard!* is like playing "Where's Waldo," except you're looking for heavy-metal symbols, song quotes or band names instead of that weird, fey man. Ozzy Osbourne, Megadeth, Metallica and other metal staples are hidden within these pages. Kazushi Hagiwara is an amazing creator mixing the best of manga, heavy metal and RPGs in one solid package.

WHAT IT'S ABOUT Four evil armies are attacking and destroying the kingdom of Metallica. Things look hopeless, but legend has it that a virgin's kiss can unleash "Dark Schneider," an ancient evil wizard trapped in the body of a 14-year-old boy. His power could defend the land, but is the legend true or is this the end of Metallica? **\$3.95 (December 12, 2001)**

BASTARD!!



01

RECOMMENDED READ

DIRTY PAIR: RUN FROM THE FUTURE TPB

(Dark Horse Comics)

WHY IT'S COOL Bounty hunters were never as beautiful as the bikini-wearing Dirty Pair! Kei and Yuri not only always get their mark, but they do so in imaginative and fantastically funny ways! Adam Warren is an ingenious soul with flawless, tight, detailed artwork and biting dialogue! It's easy to see why he has fans in both Western and Eastern circles.

WHAT IT'S ABOUT The "Trouble Consultants" have been hired to extradite 50 assorted terrorists and techno-criminals from a deep-space hellhole filled with the scum of the galaxy in 100 minutes. How can two Lovely Angels complete such a daring task? Also included is a bonus story, "Start the Violence," and a pin-up gallery with pics by Adam Hughes, Bruce Timm, Brian Stelfreeze and Humberto Ramos. **(January 2, 2002)**



A knight-in-training follows them both hoping they can train, but is it smart to ask two antagonists to work together? **\$2.95**

VAGABOND # 1 (Viz Entertainment)

In Tokugawa Era Japan, a new government has taken power and the land is in disarray. Amidst the struggles, a young man sets out on a journey of spiritual enlightenment by the way of the sword. Based on the adventures of Musashi, this story depicts his life and times. **\$4.95**

WILD 7 # 1 (Comics One)

Take a group of riotous, speedy and uncontrollable bandits whose only means of survival is to cooperate with the Japanese government, throw in some powerful crooks looking to make it any way they can, mix in some special bikes, cars and other equipment, and the result is *Wild 7*. **\$9.95**

DECEMBER 19, 2001

CANNON GOD EXAXXION # 2 : STAGE 1 PART 2 (Dark Horse)
Sexy androids, crazy techno-violence and giant robots with the power to destroy huge battleships in the blink of an eye are just some of the features in this new series from Kenichi Sonoda (*Gunslinger Cats*). Family, betrayal and determination are key factors in this mature readers title. **\$2.95**

CORRECTOR YUI # 4 (TokyoPop)

In the year 2020, humanity is still trashing nature. People have been left unconscious after entering Com-Net in order to visit the virtual nature park, but is this a virtual vacation or something else? Grosser, Yui and IR suspect something else and are going to investigate. What will they discover? **\$2.95**

INU-YASHA: A FEUDAL FAIRY TALE VOLUME 10 (Viz Entertainment)

Noraku's manipulations turn against him when his puppet, Sango finally realizes just who her true enemy is. But did Inu-Yasha and the group defeat the real Noraku, or is this crafty demon still at large? Plus, learn the origin of the Shikon Jewel. **\$15.95**

MARMALADE BOY (TokyoPop)

When Miki's parents divorced, she never dreamed they'd remarry other people and all move into the same house together! As if four crazy parents weren't enough of a stressor, Miki's gorgeous stepbrother has just transferred to her high school and become an instant heart-throb! Now she's in his shadow, too. **\$2.95**

RANMA 1/2 PART 10 # 9 (Viz Entertainment)

Ranma is determined to tell his mother the truth about his transformations, but fate—and a little fear—keep him from saying a word! Will he ever be able to reveal the truth? And how does a strange jewel affect Shampoo so much to cause such violent mood swings? **\$2.95**

SAILOR MOON VOLUME 10 (TokyoPop)

Four of the Sailor Scouts have been captured and it's up to Sailor Moon to rescue them and save their souls from the evil Mistress 9! Will the other Scouts be able to help Sailor Moon and protect Rini or will this mean disaster for them all? **\$9.95**

VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU # 1 (Ironcat)

Miyu is a tragic young girl who also happens to be a vampire. She spends her time granting them their eternal dreams of happiness while destroying demons that thrill at the pain and suffering of others. Can Miyu and her loyal friend Larva hunt wandering Shinima and come to terms with their place in the human realm? **\$17.95**

WEATHER WOMAN VOLUME ONE (CPM Manga)

If you live and die by TV ratings, what gimmick would you use to make viewers tune in? Keiko, a gorgeous Weather Woman, found that the ratings rose when her skirt length did. She's a hit, but what does her boyfriend think? What do the neighbors think? **\$15.95**

JANUARY 16, 2002

SUPER MANGA BLAST! #5 WHAT'S MICHAEL? (Dark Horse)

What's Michael? is a delightful, one-of-a-kind blend of screwball fantasy mixed with slice-of-life hilarity that has audiences on both sides of the world rolling in the aisles. Michael joins the ranks of Garfield, Krazy Kat, Tom and Heathcliff all rolled up into one fuzzy bundle. **\$8.95**

JANUARY 30, 2002

LONE WOLF AND CUB VOL. 17: THE WILL OF THE FANG (Dark Horse)

As if avoiding the Yakuza weren't tricky enough, another source, the Yagyu, has called in Japan's most deadly bounty hunters and made them an irresistible offer to bring in Lone Wolf and Cub. Can the pair trust anyone when even the peasants are tempted by the bounty? **\$9.95**

GETTING TO KNOW

UTATANE HIROYUKI

You know Utatane Hiroyuki as the artist/writer of *Seraphic Feather*, appearing in Dark Horse's monthly manga anthology *Super Manga Blast*! But now you'll get to know him more—ANIME INVASION chewed the bean paste with Hiroyuki about manga, babes and strange 2 a.m. cravings.



What current projects are you working on?

I'm working on a few projects. *Seraphic Feather* in [Japanese manga magazine] *Monthly Afternoon* and *Super Manga Blast*. It's sci-fi action with babes. *Lythia the Gales Walker* in [manga mag] *Dengeki Daioh*. Fantasy action with babes. *Glass Garden* hasn't officially started yet, so I can't talk about it. However, expect babes. I've also got a new series in the planning stages for [another manga magazine] *Ultra Jump*. It'll probably have babes in it.

Are you looking forward to the next Star Wars movie?

Actually, I'm not too interested in "Star Wars," but believe it or not, I'm looking forward to the new "Star Trek" movie. There's no geek like an old geek.



What's your favorite manga?

Yume no Koyojiki ["The Pathways of Dreams"] by Yasuyuki Ohno from Shonen Gahousha.

What's your favorite snack food at 2 a.m.?

A cheap snack food called Koppe Pan (kids love it). Kind of like plain hot dog buns with a thin filling of margarine and sweet bean paste. Really!



When you get writer's block, what do you do to overcome it?

Get the hell out of my studio. As far as possible.

What's your favorite animal?

Penguins. Especially Emperor Penguin chicks.

What do you like best about creating manga?

The period when I'm building the world and creating the story in my head. However, when I actually sit down and put pen to paper, often my ability can't actually bring forth what I've seen in my imagination. Very sad.



SERAPHIC FEATHER

E Y J . C A L E B M O Z Z O C C O



MANGA PRICE GUIDE

WHAT'S HOT, WHAT'S NOT AND WHY

Thinking of financing a trip to Japan with all the moolah you'll make investing in manga? Rob Jeremias, manager of

them in and encourages them to be consumers."

Among the more popular creators are **Yu Watase** (*Fushigi Yugi* and *Ceres, Celestial Legend*), **Naoko Takeuchi** (the still-popular *Sailor Moon*) and all-female comics collective **CLAMP** (*Card Captor Sakura*, *X/1999* and *Magic Knight Rayearth*).

The Comix Revolution in Evanston, Ill., reminds you that manga is mainly to be enjoyed.

"We look at comics as a medium of entertainment," Jeremias says of his store's philosophy. "If you're trying to make money, you're better off playing the stock market."

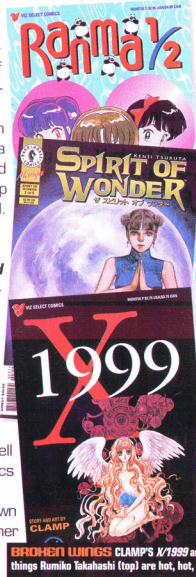
Of course, as any otaku who's ever cracked open *The Wall Street Journal* can tell you, reading manga is a lot more fun than reading stock reports, and finding the latest hit can be harder than calling up your broker. Here's a look at what's high in demand.

HOT SELLERS

- Dark Horse's recent release of **Lone Wolf and Cub** still seems to be leading the pack as America's favorite Japanese comic. Jeremias attributes the new collections' popularity to several factors—storylines full of over-the-top action, readers' fond memories of the increasingly harder-to-find First Comics back issues from the '80s, and the unique format (you get hundreds of pages of samurai violence in each issue for just 10 bucks).

- **Shojo** (girls' comics) seems to be selling pretty well in general, and it's a small wonder—American comics don't exactly bend over backwards to pull girls in.

"Shojo targets a group that was a previously unknown part of the comic book audience," says Steve Lin, owner of Anime Pavilion in Falls Church, Va. "American comics don't even try, but shojo is perfect; it draws



HOT ARTISTS

- Artist **Kia Asamiya** keeps snagging more and more American fans with his *Dark Angel*, *Steam Detectives* and *Silent Möbius* books.

His cover work on DC Comics' *Titans* and the buzz over his upcoming Batman book have helped him attract some superhero fans.

- Creator **Rumiko Takahashi**'s been hot as long as she's been making manga, and she's been making it for almost 25 years now. Her latest, the demon-meets-girl tale called *Inu-Yasha*, sells well both in collection and monthly format, and her perennial favorite martial-arts-romantic-comedy-romp *Ranma 1/2* isn't too far behind.

- Also hot is *Lain* creator **Yoshitoshi Abe**, whose art book *Essence* has been a hit with manga-philas, and there's renewed interest in fan-favorite **Masamune Shiro** (*Ghost in the Shell* and *Applesseed*) because of *Ghost in the Shell II* buzz, according to Genta of Animate in Los Angeles.

For questions to J. Caleb Mozzocco or about collecting anime, e-mail us at AnimeInvasion@aol.com.

"SOLD" ONLINE

WEIRD ANIME STUFF SELLING ON THE NET



SAILOR MOON COSPLAY HAIR PINS, \$5.50

Made by hands with too much time on them.



TRIGUN VASH SUNGLASSES, \$9.99

A Stampede of buyers want these. Really.



POKEMON TOOTHBRUSH SQUIRTLE, \$3.48

"Squirrel" is the name of the turtle—right?



SAIYUKI PACKING TAPE, \$9.60

Real fans wouldn't pack a box without it.

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1I	14.00
1J	14.00
1K	14.00
1L	14.00
1M	14.00
1N	14.00
1O	14.00
1P	14.00
1Q	14.00
1R	14.00
1S	14.00
1T	14.00
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3 X 3 EYES: CURSE OF THE GESU	
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TPB	15.00

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VIZ (1995-1997)	
HARDCOVERS	
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3 The Real Adolf	22.00
4 Days of Infamy	22.00
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TRADE PAPERBACKS	
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2 Tale in Japan	17.00
3 The Real Adolf	17.00
4 Days of Infamy	17.00
5 1945 and All That Remains	17.00

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EPIC / GRAPHIC (1991)	
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Volume 3 (1991)	5.00
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1E	14.00
1F	14.00
1G	14.00
1H	14.00
1I	14.00
1J	14.00
1K	14.00
1L	14.00
1M	14.00
1N	14.00
1O	14.00
1P	14.00
1Q	14.00
1R	14.00
1S	14.00
1T	14.00
1U	14.00
1V	14.00
1W	14.00
1X	14.00
1Y	14.00
1Z	14.00

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EPIC (1985-1988)	
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COLLECTION 5-8	16.00
COLLECTION 9-10	16.00

AKIRA	
DARK HORSE (2000-CURRENT)	
VOL. 1	25.00
VOL. 2	25.00
VOL. 3	25.00
VOL. 4	25.00
VOL. 5 (due 12/01)	28.00

ALICE IN THE LAST WORLD	
RADIO COMIX (2000-CURRENT)	
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ANIMERICA EXTRA	
VIZ (1989-CURRENT)	
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VOLUME 2 (1989-1999)	5.00
VOLUME 3 (1999-2000)	5.00
VOLUME 4 (2000-2001)	5.00
1-4	5.00
7-11	5.00

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BOOK 2 (1989)	4.00
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BOOK 3 (1989-1990)	4.00
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BOOK 4 (1991)	4.00
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2 Promethean Unbound	17.00
3 Scales of Prometheus	16.00
4 The Promethean Balance	15.00

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1S	14.00
1T	14.00
1U	14.00
1V	14.00
1W	14.00
1X	14.00
1Y	14.00
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VIZ (1988)	
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GOLD KEY (1965)	
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VIZ (2000)	
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7	2.75

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9 Angel's Ascension reprints Part 8	17.00

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5, 6	8.00
7, 8	12.00
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1	2.75
2	3.00
3	2.75
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7 Heart of Darkness	15.00
8 The Gathering II	15.00
9: The Gathering II (due 12/01)	16.00

THE TOP 25

TRANSLATED-TO-ENGLISH MANGA OF ALL TIME

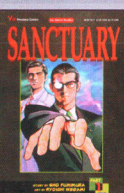
BY THE AI STAFF AND KUMAR SIVASUBRAMANIAN



25. APPLESEED
by Masamune Shirow, Dark Horse
Governments and giant fighting robots don't mix. In *Appleseed*, a robotic soldier and his young female partner enter the ostensibly utopian city Olympus only to discover that it's not so perfect after all. Considering Shirow's love for drawings of grappling robots and rendering metal, it's unlikely this mecha's going to take it sitting down. Shirow's exacting mechanical designs realize the hard-hitting mecha fights perfectly.



24. SPIRIT OF WONDER
by Kenji Tsuruta, Dark Horse
Miss China uses her inscrutable oriental powers to drop-kick and shatter the moon as a present to herself. Yes, you read that right. Those who enjoy drop-kicking (and who doesn't?) will certainly enjoy this bizarre, Victorian science-fiction comedy, which features lots of kicking and lots of groping, which leads to more kicking. Kenji Tsuruta's artwork is stunningly realistic—it has to be to backdrop this complete lunacy.



23. SANCTUARY
by Sho Fumimura and Ryochi Ikegami, VIZ
Manga fans may be disappointed to discover that there aren't very many giant robots in Japan. But organized crime? That's another story. Two disillusioned expatriates return to Japan only to find it diseased with corruption, giving them room to seize power themselves. Artist Ryochi Ikegami executes this hard-boiled thriller with near-photo-realistic style to provide superb and disturbing visuals to this gritty look inside the yakuza.



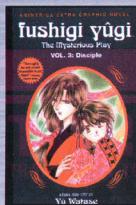
22. GON UNDERGROUND
by Masashi Tanaka, DC / Parado
Masashi Tanaka's *Gon*, a completely silent, richly detailed manga about the forest, desert and jungle adventures of a 2-foot-tall dinosaur sounds weird—and it is. *Gon* is limited to about three facial expressions, but his personality is unmistakable: he's determined, sometimes helpful and sometimes downright side-splittingly mean. A simple comic, but there's a genius in its simplicity, and it's always enjoyable.



21. COBRA
by Bulchi Terasawa, VIZ
Little-known fact: in space, chicks wear bikinis and cigar-smoking heroes with names like "Cobra" have Psycho Guns hidden in their left arms. If his sideburns don't make it obvious, *Cobra* debuted in the late '70s and has been considered a manga classic ever since. Borrowing heavily from other sources, *Cobra* forms its own unique brand of space opera goodness—it's the epitome of swingin' '70s Japanese sci-fi.

THE TOP 25

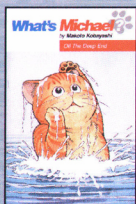
TRANSLATED-TO-ENG MANGA OF ALL TIME



20. FUSHIGI YÛGI

by Yu Watake, Dark Horse

Supposedly just for the ladies, *Fushigi Yûgi* is the tale of two modern high school girls accidentally transported to ancient China, and told they must save the world. Plenty of romance marks the series, but the real draw is the mythological setting, the enormous amount of humor (as modern girls try to make it in times before fast food) and Yu's attention to detail in her art.



19. WHAT'S MICHAEL?

by Makoto Kobayashi, Dark Horse

What's got four legs, regularly falls off the TV and scares the crap out of gangsters? It's Michael, the Japanese cat with an English name. Japan loves cats, but Makoto Kobayashi's comic speaks universally to all cat owners (and haters) everywhere, commenting on felines and the human foibles of their owners. An eclectic and hilarious mix of realism and fantasy stories, *What's Michael?* is great reading for anyone who's even seen a cat.



18. SILENT MÖBIUS

by Kia Asamiya, Viz

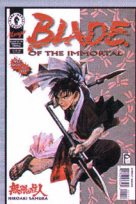
The scale of *Ghostbusters* with the gravity of *The X-Files*—that's *Silent Möbius*. The series seamlessly blends the high-tech and the arcane as it follows the Abnormal Mystery Police, six lovely ladies who battle evil spirits, robots and spine-chilling hybrids of the two. That's not to say the girls are so normal themselves, as they usually end up causing city-leveling blitzkriegs. High entertainment from the creator of *Phoenix Resurrection*.



17. GUNSMITH CATS

by Kenichi Sonoda, Dark Horse

Bounty hunters Rolly and Minnie-May might look like nice girls, but they're far more concerned with guns, cars and catching the crooks. Readers hardly get a chance to catch their breath as Kenichi Sonoda constantly launches them into the middle of manga's most intense firefights and car chases, with near-perfect realism (particularly when it comes to the guns and cars). Add a little "fan service" here and there, and you've got a fan favorite.



16. BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL

by Hiroaki Samura, Dark Horse

Evil men are easy to find—it's killing them that's difficult. Unfortunately for Manji, he has to slay 1000 of them to escape the curse of immortality. Samura sticks to the sketchy, aggressive pencil style appropriate to the harsher era he's depicting, creating some of the most striking artwork on either side of the Pacific. Plus, his period characters have an accessibly modern air about them, which keeps *Blade of the Immortal* fresh and gripping.

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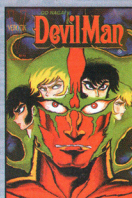
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THE TOP 25

TRANSLATED-TO-ENGLISH MANGA OF ALL TIME



15. RAIMA 1/2
by Rumiko Takahashi, Viz
When teen martial arts master Raima gets doused with cold water, he turns into a girl. His Dad turns into a panda. His fiancée would rather kick him than kiss him. And everyone else is worse. Rumiko Takahashi's side-splitting gender-bender converted many otaku, and deservedly so, since few comics ever match its comic timing or bizarre characters. And there's always great (but weird) martial arts action. A truly great read.



14. DEVILMAN
by Go Nagai, Varotik
Go Nagai is one of the top artists of the form—from the fantastic to the kinky, Go's done it all. Here, in his horror masterpiece, Nagai deviously renders the characters in his usual cartoonish style while they still perform acts of unspeakable horror. The juxtaposition is jarring enough to shift the book from simply unsettling to categorically terrifying, which makes it impossible to put down.



13. X-1999
by CLAMP, Viz
Shojo traditionally means manga by women for women; it's often romantic fluff. But shojo like X/1999 transcends its genre, and is one of the most visually up-to-date modern fantasies ever. A prophet foresees the coming destruction or salvation of the earth, and only a young boy named Kamui can decide the fate of the world. Incredible art by wonder-team CLAMP pulls the reader into this epic, making it a must-read.



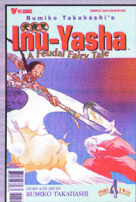
12. OH MY GODDESS!
by Kosuke Fujishima, Dark Horse
When student Keiichi accidentally summons a goddess when ordering take-out food, he brings Beildandy, the kindest, sweetest divinity ever, into his house...and her two crazy sisters. As romance blooms, hi-jinx ensue, and what should be a humdrum manga becomes divine. Always charming, always cute, but never overbearing or schmaltzy, Oh My Goddess! is one of the great romances and best reads in manga.



11. GALAXY EXPRESS 999
by Leiji Matsumoto, Viz
One of Matsumoto's early works, the tale of a young boy named Tetsuo, in a universe where machines are bent on the extinction of humanity, has been loved for years. Tetsuo seeks vengeance for his parents' murders and immortality through robotics, but eventually discovers the value of humanity. The real draw is Matsumoto's graceful art and sprawling plot, which make Galaxy Express 999 a masterpiece of storytelling. And there's a space train! Choo-choo!

THE TOP 25

TRANSLATED-TO-ENGLISH MANGA OF ALL TIME



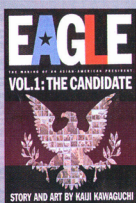
10. INU-YASHA

by Rumiko Takahashi, Viz
Schoolgirl Kagome and the half-demon Inu-Yasha search through Japan's demon-infested past to find all of the pieces of the Shikon Jewel. This latest work from the world's most famous female comic artist is often considered her best, mixing action, horror and humor with Takahashi's trademark relationships, as Inu-Yasha and Kagome ever-so-slowly realize their feelings for each other. A perfect fusion of genres and great characters provides something for all readers.



9. GHOST IN THE SHELL

by Masamune Shirow, Dark Horse
In his earlier works, Masamune Shirow examined the relationship between man and technology, but how do you define that relationship when both inhabit the same body? As cyborg agent Major Kusanagi pursues a digital terrorist, she must come to terms with the precarious line between her remaining humanity and her enhanced body, ultimately transcending the limitations of both. The manga even outdoes the movie, with better storytelling and more humor.



8. EAGLE

by Kaiji Kawaguchi, Viz
The fictional story of the first Asian-American President of the United States has won several awards, and rightly so—it's a top-of-the-line political thriller compared to any medium, as Senator Kenneth Yamazaki rides a campaign trail fraught with intrigue to the American presidency. Eagle's outstanding art looks like the best movie storyboard ever produced, proving that great manga isn't limited to fantasy or science fiction.



7. NEON GENESIS EVANGELION

by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, Viz
Sure, it came after the TV series, but you can't beat the source material. It features a 14-year-old boy, a giant robot and humanity's struggle for survival, but the fights are just a backdrop for a brilliant drama about human needs, relationships and identity. Sadamoto's soft artwork conveys the drama and the characters' complexity brilliantly, and he adds his own material to the original, giving the manga its own depth and nuance.



6. LONE WOLF AND CUB

by Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima, Dark Horse
Family. Honor. Retribution. Lone Wolf's penetrating exploration of universal themes remains a poignant example of Japanese manga more than 30 years and six continents after its original release. For a nominal fee, the ronin Itto Ogami will not-so-subtly slash your enemies into pieces. However, his first priority is protecting his baby son, and their relationship is the source of the series' unequivocal power.

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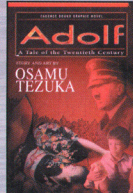
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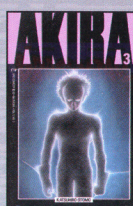
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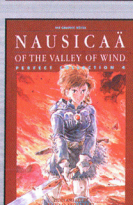
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4. AKIRA
by Katsuhiro Otomo, Dark Horse
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3. DRAGON BALL
by Akira Toriyama, VIZ
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2. NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND
by Hayao Miyazaki, VIZ
What many people don't know about Japan's top animator Hayao Miyazaki is that he also made comics—great comics—like this one. Familiar Miyazaki themes emerge here as the princess Nausicaä is forced to fight for peace on an earth that has been ruined by ecological cataclysm. Miyazaki invests every panel with the same incredible characterization, boundless imagination and outstanding art that he does in his films.



1. ASTRO BOY
by Osamu Tezuka, Gold Key
Japanese comics basically fall into two categories: those before Osamu Tezuka and those after. Tezuka's style was deceptively simple but revolutionized the face of Japanese comics. But Astro Boy doesn't just win for its historical importance—the stories are magic, encapsulating everything that's great about comics. They call Tezuka the "God of Manga," and for good reason. Check it out for yourself when Dark Horse reprints the series this spring. ■

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INVASION PROFILE

GETTER ROBO



I'LL FORM THE HEAD

Getter Robo featured the first combining robot ever—and spawned an entire anime genre. Without this trailblazing series, there would be no *Voltron*, *Robotech* or *Transformers*.

BLOODY GEARS

Go Nagai, creator of *Getter Robo*, is infamous for his violent shows. Both *Getter Robo* and *Mazinger Z* feature gruesome carnage, like severed heads bouncing across the screen, weekly.

THREE TIMES THE ACTION

The original *Getter Robo* components combined to form not one, but three robot types, depending on need: ones for beating up foes on land, air or sea.

TAG-TEAM SMACKDOWN

In 1975, Toei produced two 30-minute battle royales teaming the title mecha of two Go Nagai shows: *Great Mazinger* vs. *Getter Robo* and *Great Mazinger* vs. *Getter Robo G*.

THAT '70S ROBOT

The 2-foot-tall *Getter Dragon* toy, from sequel *Getter G*, was re-christened as *Dragon* and released in the *Shogun Warriors* line back in the '70s.

ORIGIN: When super-evolved dinosaurs living underground launch a brutal war against humanity, nothing can stand in the path of their menacing robot mechas. Nothing, that is, except Professor Sautome's amazing *Getter Robo*, a three-in-one giant robot powered by mysterious cosmic rays from outer space. Dashing Ryoma pilots the airborne *Getta Eagle*, Hayato drives the super-fast *Getta Jaguar* and rotund Musashi mans the helm of aqua-based *Getta Bear*. Individually, they are a force to be reckoned with, but when fused into *Getter Robo*, they lay waste to dinosaur robots, evil empire baddies and psychic avengers all.

NOW APPEARING: Experience furious retro-giant-robot action fused with slick contemporary animation by plugging into ADV Film's *Getter Robo Armageddon* (entitled *Shin Getter Robo* in Japan), available now on three DVDs. The angry young kids of the original 1975 series have grown into angry young men, and their mentor, Sautome, has risen from the grave to usher in the end of the world.

Part of the original *Getter Robo*, which debuted in 1975, came to America during the '80s giant-robot craze as *Starvengers*. The three series that followed later—*Getter Robo G*, *Getter Robo Go* and, most recently, *Neo Getter Robo*—are available only in Japan or via importers. Sample the manga spinoffs by checking out Viz Comic's *Venger Robo*.

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